Sandwell
CHRONICLE

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DRIVER JAILED OVER DEATH OF 'BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER', AGED 30

Victim Vikki Jones

A 'CALLOUS' driver who killed a young mother when he ploughed into her car as he showed off to party-goers has been jailed for six years.

Tyler Kendall hit Vikki Jones' Alfa Romeo after turning Dudley into his own 'make-believe race track', Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 22-year-old fled the crash and left Ms Jones to die after flouting 30mph limits, reaching speeds of 75mph.

Her then 11-year-old daughter and front seat passenger Talia suffered a fractured arm.

In a statement, Jane Jones revealed how she suffered a heart attack following her 'beautiful' daughter's death.

Paying tribute to the 30-year-old, she said: "She was always the one to be there in times of crisis and was always generous and willing to help."

Kendall had been drinking at a party he and his brother held at their Lower Gornal home in Whitebeam Close, on September 22 last year, when he got into his BMW with two of his sibling's friends at 10.30pm.

His vehicle later hit the driver's side of Ms Jones' car as she turned right into Wood Road. Kendall ran home, drinking 'copious' amounts of water and telling a party-goer: "I can't go back, I'm drunk."

He handed himself into police hours after the crash but no alcohol was detected in his blood.

Kendall, who was given an eight-year ban, admitted causing death by dangerous driving, causing serious injury by dangerous driving and failing to stop after an accident.

Sentencing, Judge Michael Challinor told the defendant he had been 'showing off', adding: "You deliberately drove at high speed around a make-believe race track.

"Your failure to stop showed a callous disregard for Vikki Jones and her daughter. You completely failed to heed what most people would have regarded as a real wake-up call when you hit those children. It is surprising that was the only charge you faced. For any driver to do that, it would normally pull them back but that did not have any effect upon you."

Jail – driver Tyler Kendall

Judge rejects claim that woman was 'reaching for tissue'

MOTHER 'HAD BB GUN IN BAG BY MISTAKE'

A MOTHER claimed she was reaching for a tissue when she pulled a BB gun from her handbag, a court heard.

Rhona Hocking 'forgot' the imitation firearm was in her bag when she rushed out of her West Bromwich home to her son's aid. The 44-year-old, who lied to probation officers about having leukaemia, said she stumbled across the pistol when moving home and did not remember she left it in a bag.

But Judge Simon Ward rejected her tale and said her account was 'hard to believe', so summoned the defendant into the witness box to convince him otherwise.

Taking the stand, Hocking said: "I wanted a tissue. The gun was in there and I pulled it out by mistake. I had a cold.

"The bag has been in the cupboard, I ain't used the bag."

Hocking, who has two carers, told Wolverhampton Crown Court her son phoned asking her to come to the Daggers Lane care home he was staying at.

She recalled picking a handbag from the cupboard before leaving her home in Withers Way at about 4.20pm on August 6 last year. When quizzed by the judge, she claimed she had more than one purse and mobile phone, picking up a handbag she believed both were in.

Judge Ward said: "I don't believe that you picked up and old bag from the cupboard not knowing that there was a BB gun in it. I believe that you took it down there because you were worried about your son. However, the way that you have given your evidence has made me realise that you are somebody who has more difficulties in life than I had read in the pre-sentence report. I think you lie quite a lot."

Report by Annabal Bagdi

He went on to say he thought Hocking brandished the BB gun to frighten a care home resident arguing with her son. But he decided to hand her a nine-month sentence, suspended for two years, claiming a jail-term would cause her to 'suffer unduly'.

The judge added: "When someone takes an imitation firearm to a care home and points it at somebody else, they should go to prison. I'm taking an exceptional decision in your case, but for the obvious learning difficulties and the problems that I have seen, you would be going straight to prison."

Mr Mukhtar Ubhi, defending, said Hocking's health issues would become 'exasperated' if sent to custody. Hocking, who was also handed a 20-day rehabilitation activity requirement, admitted possessing an imitation firearm.

Wool you believe it for farm fun?

Hollie Webb, aged eight, from Halesowen, with Wayne Vale, sheep shearing

VISITORS were quite fleece of foot, as they came from all over the Black Country for a Woolly Weekend, held at Sandwell Valley.

All over the Bank Holiday, youngsters were given the chance to meet chicks, goats, and of course, sheep, at Sandwell Park Farm, in Salters Lane.

Activities included goat milking, sheep shearing and chick handling and, despite disruption from the storms, Sandwell Council's leisure chief Councillor Bill Gavan said the event was a great success.

He said: "These events are very popular and it is a chance for local children to get in touch with the natural world down.

"The Valley offers some wonderful opportunities for families to engage with nature and to walk through the woodlands and for fun in the adventure playground area."

VIOLENCE

Police investigate disorder after final

POLICE are continuing to investigate disorder outside a bar in West Bromwich in which a man was hit in the face. The disorder is believed to have taken place outside the Sportsman Bar and Restaurant, in High Street, on Saturday at around 9.45pm – shortly after the Champions League final.

It is believed a man, in his 20s, was hit in the face and fell unconscious. A man arrested on suspicion of wounding has been released pending further investigation.

West Midlands Police is continuing to investigate the incident and is calling for witnesses to come forward, by calling 101, quoting incident reference number 20SW/117223C/18.

HEALTH

Met's 2020 target now in jeopardy

HEALTH bosses have said a 2020 opening for the £350 million Midland Met Hospital now looks 'impossible'.

Chiefs had said they hoped the delayed build in Grove Lane, Smethwick, could be completed by 2020. But Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust's chief executive Toby Lewis has admitted efforts to transfer a contract from failed Wolverhampton construction giant Carillion to another provider have hit the buffers.

● Impossible – Page 14

WEATHER

Region counts the cost of flood chaos

SANDWELL and the Black Country is still counting the cost of the shocking storms which wreaked havoc across the region.

Power supplies were cut off, main roads flooded and roads have been left damaged by the flash flooding.

Tragically, one elderly man lost his life after his vehicle was submerged in the rising waters underneath a railway bridge on the Lichfield Road, at Rushall, Walsall.

● Pensioner – Page 3

INSIDE

CATWALK GETS THE X FACTOR

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MP Tom less of a political heavyweight

Mr Watson beforehand

DEPUTY Labour leader Tom Watson is no longer such a political heavyweight after losing more than six stone.

Mr Watson, aged 51, said one part of his new regime was 'bulletproof coffee' – usually made using butter – which was 'a way of getting saturated fats into your diet which means you're not as hungry during the day'.

Mr Watson told ITV's Peston On Sunday: "I basically stopped taking sugar, refined sugar, and then I started walking 10,000 steps a day and walking up staircases and when a bit more weight came off I started to jog and cycle."

The West Bromwich East MP, first elected in 2001 said he was the 'thinnest I've been' since entering the Commons. He added: "I kept reading about Labour politicians that died early in their 50s and 60s.

"I want to get healthy, and actually for me the journey's been very interesting because what I realise is there's a lot more we can do in public health to deal with the obesity crisis, because you know we've got 10 million of these people heading to diabetes, another 15 million sitting behind them are overweight.

"When you read in the papers or you hear political speeches it's like we condemn them.

"I think this is a nutritional issue that retailers, manufacturers, public health officials and politicians have got to take seriously."

The svelte new look

We will block lorries, pledge campaigners

PROTESTERS against plans to build a controversial factory next to their homes said they will block lorries on the day work begins.

The 'People of Wednesbury Say No to Network Rail' group say they will hold a bank holiday picket on June 4 to stop engineers carrying out ground survey work.

The protesters are opposed to a new concrete sleeper manufacturing centre that Network Rail is seeking to build on the existing Bescot sidings on the border of Wednesbury and Walsall.

But before work has begun protestors claim that existing lorry movements on and off the site are making residents live miserable and any new work would make the situation worse.

Local resident Wayne Trinder says he is backing the threatened blockade '110 percent' because lorry movements past his home on Sandy Lane are already too high.

He claimed : "At present some 200 HGVs a day use Sandy Lane with about 30 going onto the site. The noise and disturbance is terrible and you must remember these are residential streets and it will only get much worse when this work begins."

The proposal to build a concrete sleeper factory, which would produce 600,000 units a year, has already led to campaigners presenting a petition signed by more than 4,000 people to Sandwell Council.

In an effort to highlight their campaign protesters are now hoping dozens of residents will join them in trying to prevent lorries getting onto the site. They are also hoping locals will join them in filing objections to the proposal when an expected planning applications is lodged with Sandwell Council later this year.

In response to the proposed picket a Network Rail spokesperson said:

"We encourage anyone to visit www.networkrail.co.uk or telephone our 24-Hour National Helpline on 03457 11 41 41."

Cancer fight Adrian to start event

Cancer survivor Adrian Webb will start Race for Life, Wolverhampton, with wife Michele and daughter Amelia

A FATHER given 12 months to live nearly five years ago has been chosen to sound the starter horn at Cancer Research UK's Race for Life alongside his proud wife and daughter.

Adrian Webb will join wife Michele and daughter Amelia on stage to celebrate Father's Day in style at Wolverhampton's West Park on June 17.

More than 1,000 women are taking part in the event, including Michele and Amelia, who will run the 5k for the second time in honour of Adrian who was diagnosed with skin cancer in September 2012.

"Father's Day is going to be really special this year," said Adrian, from Dudley, who also has a son, Josh. "It's a great privilege to be asked to start Race for Life because it's entirely down to research that I'm here today."

The 52-year-old music distribution manager from Netherton, received surgery and radiotherapy after being diagnosed but, two months after treatment ended, he discovered the cancer had spread to his lungs, liver, spleen, bowel and spine.

"It took me a while to come back from that but, in the end, I thought 'this is my life and I'm going to live it'."

To help him on the road to recovery, he was given three brand new drugs over the course of the following three years and is now in remission.

Carphone Warehouse set to shut 90 outlets

NEARLY 100 Carphone Warehouse stores are to close this year as the retailer's new boss pledges to "take action" to tackle challenges in the firm's troubled mobile phone unit.

Dixons Carphone said that it will shut 92 of its smaller standalone Carphone Warehouse shops over the next 12 months as it gets to grip with changing consumer habits.

Cash-strapped consumers are holding on to older devices for longer and going "Sim-only", which has dented the group's performance.

However, the firm insisted that no jobs will be lost as staff will be offered the chance to move to larger branches nearby. The group has around 1,100 sites nationwide.

Many Carphone Warehouse shops are just a short distance from the larger PC World stores, most of which now include Carphone outlets. It is these smaller stores that are most vulnerable, although the company is not yet saying which shops face closure.

Carphone Warehouse has branches in Smethwick, Oldbury, Stourbridge and two in Walsall and West Bromwich. Currys PC World has outlets in Stafford, Kidderminster and on the Gallagher Retail Park in Wednesbury.

Joanne rewarded for LGBT efforts

A WOLVERHAMPTON Homes employee has scooped a top prize for her work with the LGBT community.

Business efficiency officer Joanne Eckersley was crowned the winner of Diversity in Housing's Straight Ally Award.

She was shortlisted alongside three others for being 'a friend to the LGBT community, despite not being LGBT'.

The judges said: "Jo works outside the day job to reach the wider community. She's a great role model." Her nomination came after she worked with organisations across the city to help launch the Wolverhampton LGBT+Alliance.

She was also a 'major player' in last year's Wolves Pride, helping to organise the event for the city. Winners were announced at a prize-giving ceremony at Aston Villa Football Club.

Mercian soldiers training in Canada

SOLDIERS from the Mercian Regiment have once again taken to Canada to tackle a gruelling annual exercise.

The 35-day Exercise Prairie Storm has seen troops take to the fields of the British Army Training Unit in Suffield, Alberta, Canada, in humid conditions.

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Get ready to T-rex off at 'Jurassic' golf course

AMBITIOUS plans for a new adventure golf course have doubled in size – and now feature dinosaurs.

A 7.5ft tall Tyrannosaurus Rex, volcano and a 39ft-wide giant octopus are among the Jurassic-inspired models being proposed for the site in south Birmingham. The overall scale of the 18-hole course would increase from 11,840 sq ft to 23,680 sq ft on the green belt plot allowing for longer and wider holes as well as a new path to run the length of the attraction.

Birmingham City Council approved the original proposal submitted by Universal Golf and Leisure in 2015 but now the firm has stated the scheme is 'too small to produce the desired consumer appeal' and have submitted the bigger plans.

Universal Golf and Leisure have also provided several images showing the types of models they want to build at the site, including a crashed jeep, hatching egg and giant bone.

The fresh plans would also create two more jobs at the Wast Hills Golf Centre in Kings Norton.

Since buying and taking over the centre in 2011, the company has increased the average amount of daily customers from 75 to 110 in the high season and 40 to 65 in the low season.

They want the crazy golf course to appeal more to younger people and families as well as increase the time customers spend at the facility.

Extra spaces and possible charges

A RAILWAY station is to get a new multi-storey car park providing more than 500 new spaces – but charges could be introduced as a consequence.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has lodged a planning application with Birmingham City Council for the five-level facility at Longbridge.

The plot, which is accessed from Devon Way and sits between the station and The Factory youth centre, currently has 102 spaces which are free to use. However, they are typically all snapped up before 8am. The multi-storey will deliver 644 bays resulting in an increase of 542. The WMCA has stated a daily charge will be introduced, although the level of the fees has yet to be confirmed.

Metro vandals hit

POLICE are investigating a spate of vandalism on the Midland Metro. Windows were smashed on the service at Bilston and Wednesbury. Anyone with information can call 0800 40 50 40 or text 61016.

FLOODS HIT BLACK COUNTRY

Toll End Road, Tipton, during the floods

Where tragedy struck, at Lichfield Road, Rushall

A fire engine on Pershore Road, Birmingham

Pensioner tragedy as storms cause chaos

A car is stranded in West Bromwich

Stephen Lapper's picture of Moseley flooding

Rain hammers down in Walker Street in Tipton during the incredible deluge on Sunday

THE Black Country has been dealing with the aftermath of freak floods that caused havoc and tragedy over the Bank Holiday weekend.

And residents around Lichfield Road, in Rushall, Walsall are coming to terms with the death of a pensioner after his vehicle was caught in the rising waters underneath a railway bridge.

The storms which hit the region resulted in many areas suffering a month's rainfall in a matter of minutes. Eyewitnesses said a resident and council worker had desperately tried to rescue the victim, diving into the floodwater at around 2am and trying to break the van window with a hammer. However, the man was taken to hospital and pronounced dead a short time later.

Mother-of-two Kirinna Johnson, aged 26, said: "One of our neighbours dived in when he saw the car get stuck, he was a real hero. "He said he saw the driver open the door and try to push the van but the water was too deep. When that failed, he got back in and tried to reverse out. A council worker, who had just dropped off some sandbags, waded in too. They shouted for a hammer and tried to break a window. Meanwhile, another neighbour called the police. But by the time help arrived he had been in the water for five minutes."

Her husband Daniel, 27, said: "Another neighbour blew up an air bed and sent it out on the water to help try and rescue him."

The couple said youngsters stood near the bridge for much of the night shouting at drivers to warn them of the danger, but many ignored them.

A driver was rescued from the same spot at around midnight after driving in from the direction of Walsall.

Residents said he dialled 999 in a panic from his mobile, telling emergency services that he could not swim. Mr Johnson said: "He opened the boot and it looked like he was trying to get out through that exit. The car was floating in the water and all the stuff in his boot was bobbing in the water. Luckily he was rescued."

Resident Antonio Longhi, father of Councillor Marco Longhi, the Mayor of Walsall, lives in Ladypool Close beside the bridge where the tragedy occurred. He said water gushed down from Park Lane pits, an area of lakes and canals, into the road, which dips steeply under the railway bridge.

Water levels rose as high as two metres below the top of the bridge arch, turning the road into a treacherous 70-metre wide lake. Mr Longhi, 75, said: "There were firefighters, ambulance and police everywhere."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Liam on list for top celebrity dad

HE welcomed his first child into the world with girlfriend Cheryl Tweedy last year – now the Black Country's Liam Payne has been nominated for a Celebrity Dad of The Year award.

The 24-year-old joins the likes of Prince William, Rio Ferdinand, Anthony Joshua and Simon Cowell on the shortlist.

The former One Direction star from Wolverhampton has protected his son, one-year old Bear, from the Press, with few glimpses of him on social media. He has called fatherhood 'the most amazing experience' and gives full credit to 34-year-old Cheryl for being such a good mother.

Shooting near shisha lounge

A MAN suffered 'superficial' injuries after being shot outside a shisha lounge. Police were called at about 5.45am on Saturday night to Arabian Nights, on Bissell Street, Highgate in Birmingham to reports of gunshots being heard.

Officers arrived within minutes and found no sign of trouble. Two hours later, a man presented himself at hospital with minor wounds believed to have been caused by a gunshot. Officers are conducting enquiries, and anyone with information can call 101, quoting log 461 of May 26.

Get walking boots on for dementia

CENTRAL England Co-op staff, customers and members are getting their walking boots on for a sponsored stroll through Sutton Park to raise funds for specialist dementia nurses.

The DUK Walk will start at 11am on June 10, with options of a 3km or a 6km route through the park. The Lichfield-based society is encouraging people to join in and bring a picnic, family, friends and pets along to support. The event is free and all people need to do to take part is visit www.eventbrite.co.uk and search for #DUKWalk.

Star-studded Bowie tribute show on way

DAVID Bowie fans will be treated to a star-studded tribute to the icon in a show coming to Birmingham next year. Holy Holy will see Bowie's drummer Woody Woodmansey perform, joined by the idol's producer Tony Visconti, on bass.

Vocals will be provided by Heaven 17 frontman Glenn Gregory.

The show will take place at Birmingham Town Hall on February 13. To book, visit www.thsh.co.uk.

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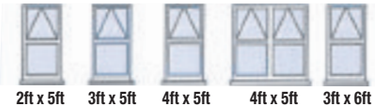

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COUNTY NEWS

11pc of weapons crime ends in jail

CRIMINALS in the West Midlands convicted for weapons possession were more likely to be given a community order than a prison sentence of more than a year, new figures show.

According to the Ministry of Justice, 91 out of the 799 of people convicted for possession of guns or knives across the region last year were handed jail time of 12 months or more.

While this represents only 11 per cent of those convicted, over the same period 235 offenders (30 per cent) were given community orders.

Just 35 criminals caught with weapons (four per cent) were jailed for four years or more.

Severn Trent to invest £100m

WATER company Severn Trent, which serves millions of customers across the Midlands, has unveiled a £100 million investment drive.

It comes as the business confirmed its turnover for the year to March 31, increased to £1.69 billion, up from £1.63bn in 2017, while pre-tax profits also rose from £520.1m to £541m.

The firm said that the £100m investment, which has been generated from savings, would go towards a number of initiatives. This includes 20,000 extra pressure monitors in its network of pipes, which means that leaks and bursts can be spotted more quickly.

Contactless paying is proving popular

THE West Midlands has the joint highest level of banking customers with a contactless card. A study from UK Finance, the trade body representing the banking sector, put it at 81 per cent, level with the North East.

Almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of banking customers in the region regularly use their card to make contactless payments – the highest proportion in the country. UK Finance looked at how technology and innovation are transforming retail banking.

Knitted poppies plan down on farm

A CASCADE of knitted poppies is planned at a country park to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

The aim at Northycote Farm in Wolverhampton, is to have the display of red woollen poppies on display in time for the summer solstice on June 21. Poppies can be handed in to the Friends of Northycote base at Underhill Lane or to the farm manager.

Sprinklers set for 200 tower blocks

MORE than 200 Birmingham tower blocks will be fitted with sprinklers after city council bosses pushed through a decision which had been temporarily halted.

But the authority is faced with having to borrow millions of pounds to see through the work with chiefs sceptical that a Government funding bid will be accepted.

Council leader Ian Ward said the council would be 'ill-advised' to ignore the 'crystal clear' evidence from the London Assembly and West Midlands Fire Service which had recommended the installation of the suppression systems in response to the Grenfell Tower disaster.

He added it was 'regrettable' Prime Minister Theresa May had indicated local authorities would not receive financial backing from the Government for the roll-out after the council made a written request for funding. The council had already vowed to spend £19m of its own money on the programme but if their bid for £19.4m from the Government is formally turned down they said they would fund the costs through prudential borrowing.

The sprinkler programme had previously been blocked by the council's housing and homes overview scrutiny committee. Councillor Mike Leddy had expressed concerns sprinklers would exacerbate existing flooding problems in high-rises.

While former member Barry Henley, a one-time chief executive of Chubb Fire Engineering who had led the protests, argued it was a waste of money stating the fire at Grenfell was nothing to do with sprinklers.

Guinness record dream for the floating catwalk

By Pippa Armstrong

FAMOUS faces joined 30 professional models and some 120 guests to witness a Guinness world record attempt for the longest floating catwalk.

A Wolverhampton-based model agency is behind the bid, now waiting to hear if it has a place in the Guinness Book of Records.

Dream Street Models, which was based in Walsall but is now at Hilton Hall in Essington, had waited 28 weeks to get approval from Guinness for the attempt.

The journey began in Stourport and saw the catwalk on a boat floating down the River Severn – considered to be the UK's longest river at 220 miles.

A two-hour fashion show attracted such faces as X Factor stars Stevi Ritchie and Chloe Jasmine as well as a performance from 90s Icelandic pop singer Alda Bjork Ólafsdóttir who has sold five million records worldwide.

Platform

The event showcased designs from all over the UK – high street to couture fashion. The backstage team included the Bryanna Angel make-up artist as seen in Vogue and Julian Fiddimore's Revail who manage the elite beauty queens in the UK, along with top hairstylist Hair by Harps.

Dream Street Models founder Chloe Avon said: "I am happy to be able to provide a platform for designers to be seen whilst giving models the opportunity to walk in a large production."

She expects to find out within the next fortnight whether they achieved a world record. Dream Street is getting a reputation for unusual fashion venues. Last September it held a fashion show at Blithbury Reindeer Lodge in Rugeley. The next show will take place on a moving train at Chasewater Railway in Burntwood on July 1.

Hold tight – Icelandic singer Alda entertains
Picture by Cloud11 Photography

X Factor star Chloe Jasmine.
Picture David Sutton Photography

Evening look – crowds look on as another model takes to the floating catwalk

All aboard – the catwalk record attempt attracted hundreds of people

Liberty to shut site but still in jobs pledge

NEARLY 50 workers at a factory have been told it will close over the next five months.

Liberty Group says it has decided to pull out of the markets served by its Drawn Tubes and Fairbright Wire businesses in Phoenix Street, West Bromwich.

But the company says it will aim to find new roles for the 49 workers at either its own sites in the West Midlands or with other engineering companies nearby.

Liberty has around 17 sites in the West Midlands and employs around 1,000 people across the Black Country after it bought up a string of factories following the collapse of Caparo Industries in 2015.

Both Phoenix Street businesses face a long-term decline in their markets and competition from bigger and cheaper rivals on the Continent.

Liberty has decided there is no future for the company in either drawn tubes or manufactured steel bale wire.

The staff at Phoenix Street were warned in February that the company was reviewing operations at the site.

The workforce was told last Thursday of the decision to close the factory over the next five months.

A spokesman said: "In line with our established commitment to our employees we are hopeful that suitable alternative jobs will be found for most, if not all, of the affected staff.

"The Liberty Drawn Tube business will be gradually scaled down over the next five months, while the raw material at Fairbright Wire business will be converted to finished product and sold within a shorter period."

Calls to honour bomb veterans

TOM Watson has called for veterans of Britain's first nuclear bomb to be honoured with a medal. The deputy Labour leader said it was time Britain acknowledged the sacrifice of soldiers who witnessed the explosion of the hydrogen bomb, in the 1950s.

More than 20,000 servicemen were sent to Christmas Island in the South Pacific to witness the test, and their only protection from the 2.8 megaton bomb was being told to turn away and cover their eyes.

The West Bromwich East MP is supporting a parliamentary petition. He said: "Some died early. Others suffered decades of illness. Their wives report three times the usual rate of miscarriages."

Visit petition.parliament.uk/petitions/220170 to sign the petition.

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Junk clearing firm moves to city after bin strikes

A LONDON-based junk clearance company has chosen Birmingham as the location of its first operation outside of the capital in the wake of the bin collection strikes in the second city last year.

Waste experts JunkHunters.co.uk believes its services will be in demand from businesses eager to bolster the existing rubbish collection services provided by the city council.

Birmingham was chosen as the company's first location outside London as managing director Harsha Rathnayake and area manager Romesh Gilles believe England's second city has plenty of demand for a quality junk clearance service.

It believes the strikes may have left some businesses more willing to use a private provider to collect and recycle their unwanted items.

The Birmingham branch will cover the city and surrounding areas, offering a waste removal service to both companies and domestic clients.

The business will be collecting a wide range of unwanted items from building sites and commercial premises including IT equipment, office furniture and industrial waste.

It will also commit to recycling and reusing as much waste as possible.

The company currently recycles 75 per cent of all items collected, with plans to reach an 80 per cent target in the coming years.

Security fears con woman is jailed

A WOMAN who conned her way into vulnerable victims' homes by pretending to be a police officer or from a private security firm has been jailed.

Derrol Flynn targeted her victims, who were aged between 55 and 98, by turning up at their homes uninvited and showing them fake ID cards, between May 26, and June 26, 2017.

Derrol Flynn

She would claim she was in the neighbourhood due to a recent spate of burglaries. Once inside the house, she would dupe victims into giving her cash directly or leaving the money where she could steal it.

One of her final victims was a 98-year-old woman and carer for her 105-year-old husband who suffered from cancer. Flynn, formerly of Kitts Green Road, Kitts Green, stoleup to £7,000 from the couple.

She pleaded guilty to three counts of attempted burglary and one of burglary and was jailed for nine years.

Messing about for children's charity

Your family's chance to get messy

FAMILIES can get messy in aid of the NSPCC this summer as a popular event comes to the West Midlands for the first time.

The NSPCC's Messathon will take place at Sandwell Valley Park on July 21 and 22 – and budding Messathletes can now sign up to take part. It is one of only two Messathons taking place across the country this year, with the other being held in Surrey.

Children aged four and above will have the chance to splatter through mud, swoosh along water slides and scramble over hay bales during the exhilarating course. There will also be a ball pit, cargo net, wall climb and much more in the 2.5km course.

Once participants finish the course, they can then make a day of it by visiting the event village. Everyone taking part gets a free T-shirt. Cash raised through entry fees and sponsorship goes towards the charity's vital work keeping children safe from abuse and neglect across the UK.

The NSPCC's Schools Service reached nearly 25,000 primary school pupils in the Black Country alone last year with its 'Speak Out. Stay Safe' campaign, teaching children how to keep themselves safe from abuse.

Registration to Messathon costs £15.50 for adults, £9.50 for children and each team, at a maximum of six, should aim for a sponsorship target of £200. The early bird discount code YESTOMESS15 will give participants 15 per cent off.

To sign up and register for Messathon, visit www.nspcc.org.uk/messathon or call 0203 772 9720.

There are also opportunities to volunteer at the event – email messathon@nspcc.org.uk

Killer driver's appeal kicked out by judges

A DANGEROUS driver who killed a great-grandfather in a high-speed smash on a Black Country road has failed to have his 10-year sentence reduced.

Personal trainer Kamran Raja, aged 37, was driving at 'motorway speeds' on the A4123 Wolverhampton Road in Oldbury just before he struck 85-year-old Edward Harris' Honda in April 2016.

He pleaded guilty to causing the pensioner's death by dangerous driving at Wolverhampton Crown Court last September but later applied to the Court of Appeal against the length of his prison term.

However the appeal judges concluded he deserved every day of his decade-long sentence and rejected the bid.

Raja was travelling at almost double the 40mph limit shortly before ploughing into the Honda at the junction with Castle Road East, propelling the car 100ft up the road.

Overtaking

Mr Harris had just dropped off his daughter after they had attended church together when the crash occurred. He had been able to walk from his car afterwards but died the following day at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham after suffering multiple organ failure.

Raja, of Acocks Green, Birmingham, initially pleaded not guilty, blaming Mr Harris for the collision but changed his plea at the last minute.

Witnesses spoke of Raja driving like an 'idiot', aggressively overtaking and undertaking other motorists, the Appeal Court heard. Mr Justice Dingemans said that the attempt to blame the victim, combined with Raja's long record of driving convictions, made the offence worse. Mr Harris suffered a bleed on the brain, various fractures, a bruised lung, and bruising to his liver.

Raja, a father-of-four, had a long record of previous driving offences for which he had spent some time behind bars. He was also disqualified from driving for five years following his release.

Mayor's roll of honour is unveiled

Oliver Cobbold, 10, at the unveiling of the mayor's roll at Tipton library

Councillor Ahmadul Haque

AN outgoing mayor has unveiled a roll of honour for former town civic leaders.

Councillor Ahmadul Haque helped reveal the old Tipton Roll of Mayors board at the town's library. The board has gone on public display for the first time in years.

A Sandwell Council spokesman said: "In one of his final duties during his year as Mayor of Sandwell, Ahmadul Haque MBE has officially received the old Tipton Roll of Mayors board, which will now go on public display at Tipton Library."

NEWS IN BRIEF

£295k fines for illegals in work

WEST Midlands businesses were fined £295,000 between April and June last year for employing illegal workers. Despite this a survey by online vetting and screening company uCheck found that a third of British bosses felt empathetic toward people working illegally.

The survey took in 2,800 business owners to get their honest opinion and 22.1 per cent said that immigrants are 'just trying to earn a living', while 11 per cent felt that the illegal workers 'deserve the right to work'.

The study found that those in the charity sector were the most compassionate toward illegal workers.

Florence and co set for Brum gig

FLORENCE and The Machine will play for fans in Birmingham later this year.

The Indie outfit, founded in London in 2007, is best known for song such as Dog Days Are Over, Shake It Out, You've Got The Love and many more.

The band will play the second city on a tour marking the release of new album High As Hope, due to be released on June 29.

Florence and The Machine will play the Genting Arena on Friday, November 16. Tickets for the show go on sale tomorrow, Friday, at 10am.

Canal festival to mark 10th year

THE tenth Tipton Canal and Community Festival is taking place in the town on September 22 and 23.

It will run on and by the Birmingham Old Main Line Canal and include working and trip boats, as well as arts and craft activities and live entertainment.

Narrowboats from all over the country are expected to take part in the event run by Tipton Community Association.

There will be activities at Neptune Health Park and Coronation Gardens over the weekend.

City date for Britpop favourites Sleeper

BRITPOP favourites Sleeper play in Birmingham later this year.

The group, which is recording an album for release in 2019, will appear at the O2 Institute in Digbeth on November 10.

Sleeper reunited for their first shows in 19 years last year,

The group, which features singer Louise Wener, had hits including Inbetweener and Sale of the Century in the 1990s.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Storing up trouble as millions shop online

IT'S always a bit of a downer when you return from your holiday. And even more so when you switch on the television hoping to relax with a pint of mild and a bit of Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away, only to be greeted instead by Fiona Phillips wittering on about the 'fall of a national institution'.

Asking the so-so former breakfast TV presenter to analyse the decline of Marks & Spencer is like getting Gazza to front a documentary on Greek literature. Strange choice.

But while it was not the viewing I had planned, there is also no denying Channel 5 had its timing spot-on with this one, coinciding perfectly with the news that M&S would be closing 100 stores, with the one in Walsall among the first.

Now, unlike Fiona, I don't hold any great place in my heart for M&S. Maybe it's the memories of never-ending boredom in childhood, when this seemed by far the dullest place in the world. Or maybe it was the way it so quickly turned its back on the high streets of Dudley and West Bromwich when it calculated there was more profit in having a single branch at Merry Hill.

This is not a national institution, it's just another store chain. And one which showed so little loyalty to its Black Country customers in the 1980s can hardly demand an outpouring of goodwill now it is facing hard times.

But while I won't mourn the brand, I do feel huge sadness for the people losing their jobs through no fault of their own, and also the huge hole this is going to leave in our already-struggling town centres. Already there is speculation about the future viability of the Saddlers Centre, where the Walsall branch is based, and I fear we will see more of the same when the full extent of the closure programme becomes clear.

It seems the one thing everyone agrees on is that it is growth of online shopping which is killing our towns. So why do we do it? Well frankly, I don't. I've never seen the appeal in paying up-front for items I haven't seen, and then being told they can't be delivered because I am at work. Yet strangely, millions of people can't get enough of it, probably the same people who will take to their keyboards bemoaning the decline of their town.

It's time to wake up. If you care about where you live, support your town centre, even if it means paying a few pounds more. Otherwise, a few years from now, all we will be left with is a few global technology giants. And nobody will make documentaries mourning their passing.

No life, or style for retirement, it seems, with magazine

Blair's latest Brexit re-referendum ramblings brought forth an interesting response

Gordon Brown in his days as PM – as chancellor, he is accused of targeting Mr Rhodes

TV fly-on-the-wall show 24 Hours In Police Custody – making no assumptions

Feeling ruff after taking supplement

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

I MENTIONED Virol a few days ago. It was a food supplement which vanished from the market some years back. A reader, after some research, points out that the ingredients of Virol sound remarkably like dog food. Well, it never did me any harm. Woof.

INTRIGUINGLY, a Google search for Virol will take you to an Amazon web page offering three varieties of malt extract and a weatherproof masonry sealer. Versatile, or what?

AH, the eternal steely pragmatism of the British. An online debate about Tony Blair's suggestion for a second Brexit referendum brought forth this gem: "While the message was okay, nonetheless after reading it, could someone please shoot the ****ing messenger."

ANOTHER flurry of messages follows up the issue of litter around Loch Lomond which I touched on recently. "The answer is education," declares one contributor. Really? And how many hours in the classroom does it take to convey the message: "Don't drop that."?

THERE were times during the Chancellorship of Gordon Brown when I thought he had it in for me personally. His budgets seemed surgically targeted at me for earning a little more than the minimum wage, using a company car and having a fuel card, while he was bunging more money to the old and frail. Year after year, Brown took money out of my wage packet and gave it to my mother-in-law. Was this his revenge for one or two (okay, maybe more) difficult interviews? Anyway, the Tory government has now taken up the hounding of me. In the crusade against pollution, I am targeted for driving a diesel car, for having solid-fuel central heating and for keeping the baronial hall tepid with a couple of log-burning stoves. All may be banned in the name of cleaner air. Dare no-one suggest the problem could be solved if selfish people learned to breathe a little less?

WHEN a man in Ohio phoned police to report that a pig was following him home, the cops assumed the caller was drunk. Not so. He was sober and the animal was a domestic pig in need of company. I bet we were all reminded of the poem about the drunk who falls asleep in the gutter next to a pig. There are several versions but they all end with a lady, disgusted at the sight exclaiming: "You can tell a man who boozes by the company he chooses." / And the pig got up and slowly walked away.

SOMETHING called a "Lifestyle Retirement Magazine" has just arrived from Legal & General. Dear God above – is this the future? The front cover shows an old bloke with a grey Corbyn-like beard riding a bike while wearing a plastic helmet. On his feet are trainers, worn over black socks, presumably to indicate he is English. They call it "lifestyle" but what sort of life is this and where, oh where, is the style? Turn to page 5 of the L&G leaflet and there's a graphic of a toilet roll. Why? Because according to a survey, one of the things that surprises people when they retire is "How many toilet rolls we use." For the record, I know several retired folk who don't own a bike or a beard, and who never, ever fret about bog-paper. And if they found themselves morphing into Jeremy Corbyn I'm sure they'd do something about it. If this is the image most people have about retirement it may explain why so many are happy to keep on working.

EVERY journalist knows that sinking feeling experienced by the detective in 24 Hours in Police Custody (C4) when the threads fall apart and you realise the great story you're working on isn't a story at all. In this case it came when an officer uncovered medical records showing that a woman found with her throat slashed – and assumed to be a murder victim – had a long history of self-harming, including trying to cut her throat. But then the only eye-witness had already told cops she had seen the "victim" alone at the death scene. I found it surprising that anybody, in this case the woman's oddball partner, could be arrested and held in custody on little more than an assumption. They tell us we're innocent until proved guilty!

BUT then police and hacks work differently. For example, "never assume anything" is one of the golden rules of journalism. At least I assume it is.

TALKING POINT

Music to my ears to say I'm a rock chick

LIKE Cher without the surgery, Debbie Harry on a quiet day and Madonna if she ate cake – I too am an ageing rock chick.

As a sassy teen rocker I can remember looking at 'old' people at gigs – probably aged about 35 to my young eyes – and wondering why would they still be turning out for concerts at their age?

Today I am more than a little over the age of 35 and still go to as many gigs as ever. Admittedly my back and calf muscles ache the following day. And though my jeans are still too tight it is in very different places and more to do with a hearty supper rather than some DIY tapering on my mum's sewing machine. I tend to take a coat these days too.

The standing/dancing area remains my ticket of choice and, being vertically challenged, I need to get close enough to see. Though when going to watch the 'classic' bands still going from my youth I find they are often all-seaters now. Even the singers tend to need a sit down.

I can still be found at the odd music festival – but NEVER in the camping area. Camping at music festivals is something that can only be enjoyed by the young or insomniacs. Give me a nice warm hotel bed and an en suite bathroom every time. My back isn't up to a camp bed or deflating airbed anymore.

Sadly, there seems something a little undignified to see women of a certain age still staking a claim to their place in the music scene. Isn't it time Madonna covered up a little and stopped subjecting us to images of her muscles and veiny arms? And I don't doubt that the excitable young things bounding around at Kasabian view my bestie and I as a pair of Edina and Patsy clones.

In truth I always thought I would 'grow out of' loud and live music at some point and develop a love of easy listening and maybe even classical. Thankfully it never happened.

I dislike the rapid-chat-to-music that my daughter listens to and can regularly be heard shouting mumfully 'turn that row down'. Would it kill her to listen to a guitar band every now and again?

But music still lifts my mood, evokes uncharacteristic energy and movement from me and brings a smile to my face. So I have no intention of giving up going to concerts – I am an ageing rocker and proud of it.

I once saw a 'motivational' plaque with the message 'Life is a piece of music, and you are supposed to be dancing." Well I am still dancing – just not in the the mosh pit anymore.

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Worrying position for failing Labour

I WOULD like to reply to the letter of Alan T Harrison (Letters May 10) concerning the recent council election results, and the present state of play of the Labour leadership and party .

Mr Harrison feels that Labour did much better than the Tories' in the recent elections. Well based on those results the forecasts are that a General Election would mirror the 2017 result e.g. no overall majority for either main party. Given that Labour has been in opposition for the last eight years this is not impressive for them. They should be well in front at this stage of the electoral cycle. Even more so when you take into account the wobbles of Mrs May on Brexit, and the appalling treatment of the Windrush generation.

So why is Labour not doing better? I would suggest that the majority of the older white working class population, of which I am one (born in a coal mining village into a family of coal miners), are not impressed by the current Labour front bench.

Corbyn has been mired in recent anti-Semitism allegations. He of course has also associated with comments supporting terrorist organisations e.g. "our friends in Hamas". Furthermore, his reaction to the nerve gas attack in Salisbury was appalling. All logic and evidence points to the Russians (see also the statement given by Andrew Parker head of MI5 on May 14).

Mr Harrison also says that the Parliamentary party should support the leader without question. Funny that, given that Jeremy Corbyn's historical voting record against successive Labour Governments for well over 25 years.

KEITH BATE
Wolverhampton

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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UK's main parties are unelectable

SO the political pundits seem astounded that no political party made major gains at the recent local elections.

Well perhaps it could be that major local political issues are of no consequence nationally, or that no-one either likes or trusts the multi-millionaire toff that is May or believes a word that the seminite and terrorist lover Corbyn portrays.

We the voter have nowhere to go.

UKIP offered us a chance to fluff some feathers, then faded, the Liberals offer no challenge, so where do we go?

And that's why there was no clear winner...they are all alike...without sharing policies...unelectable.

SHAUN HARRISON
West Bromwich

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Telling indictment of Carillion bosses

'ONLY interested in filling their mouths with gold' – what a staggering indictment of directors of a company responsible for billions worth of Government contracts.

Carillion was one of the country's biggest contractors and once again the directors ride off into the sunset with their saddlebags full of their workers' cash, and little doubt will soon be sitting in the Lords or on their yachts partying with the Longbridge four and, of course, Sir Philip Green.

Lessons learned you bet, the next bunch won't be caught out in such a naive manner.

Half of Britain's industry is run by fools and many politicians went to school with them. It's one big club with funny handshakes and a trouser leg rolled up.

S T VAUGHAN
Birmingham

Visually impaired group cash

SANDWELL Visually Impaired (SVI) would like to announce the outcome of a Charity Street Collection Day fundraising event which took place on Saturday May 5.

The collection took place between Princess Parade and Duchess Parade (former High Street), West Bromwich from 10am to 4pm.

The amount collected was £216.28. There were no expenses incurred in connection with the collection.

Grateful thanks to all who contributed to this charity fund raising day, monies raised will be used to benefit blind and visually impaired residents of Sandwell.

If you wish to donate to SVI's Justgiving by Text Account please text SVIG33 and the amount you wish to donate (eg: SVIG33 £2) to 70070. All donations will be gratefully received. Details are available on our website: www.sandwellvisually-impaired.org.uk.

SVI OFFICE
West Bromwich

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

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Mother forced teen daughter into marriage

A WOMAN has been convicted after taking her teenage daughter to Pakistan and forcing her to marry a man twice her age.

The defendant, who is from Birmingham but cannot be named for legal reasons, threatened to burn her 17-year-old daughter's passport and assaulted her when she protested at marrying the 36-year-old man.

The victim was flown to Pakistan and then told she had to marry the man after she had turned 18. In the days leading up to the wedding the victim made contact with family in the UK to for help but the ceremony went ahead.

The defendant returned to the UK without her daughter but was brought before the Family Division of the High Court, after the involvement of social services.

With the assistance of the Home Office, the girl was brought back to the UK and told police and social workers what had happened. Her mother was convicted of forced marriage and perjury at Birmingham Crown Court.

Help protect wildlife plea

PEOPLE are being urged to make a pledge to help turn a county wild and help celebrate the 50th anniversary of a nature group.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust is asking people to Pledge a Patch for wildlife to help celebrate 50 years of working to protect nature reserves and flora and fauna.

Pledge a Patch was officially launched earlier this month and the team has already signed up more than 80 pledges.

Patches that have already been pledged can be seen on a map at on the Trust's www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/pledgeapatch website.

Anger at PM's funding delay following Grenfell

Community rallies for arson-hit nursery

AN arson-hit children's day nursery with thousands of pounds worth of damage has seen members of a community rally in support.

The Little Explorers Day Nursery in St Anne's Road, Cradley Heath, was left with damage to its shed, fencing and artificial turf after arsonists struck. Nursery bosses have described the damage as 'horrendous'.

Help has now come from as far as Southampton and Plymouth with an online campaign set up to help restore the business back to its usual state having doubled its initial target of £500. Nursery owner Kelly Shaw, aged 36, from Hagley, said: "I got a call around 2am from the fire service asking for me to go down to the nursery because there had been a fire.

"I was in bits to start with. I was not aware of the extent of the damage and when I got there I just cried.

"If the fire service would not have been around the corner it would have just gone through the whole building."

Flames spread across the garden and reached the main building but fire crews were able to stop the blaze from causing further damage.

The nursery, which employs 21 members of staff and serves up to 50 children a day, had to shut following the attack and has run a limited service since – with bosses expecting everything to return to normal within the next month. To donate visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/littleexplorers

Childcare Practitioner Karen Standen with the debris left after the arson attack at Little Explorers Nursery in Cradley Heath

A BLACK Country council's housing chief has hit out at delays in the Government paying out cash to local authorities in the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster.

Councillor Kerrie Carmichael, cabinet member for housing, on Sandwell Council said it was about time the announcement of funding was made after a recent pledge by Prime Minister Theresa May – nearly a year after the fire in London claimed 72 lives.

Mrs May said the Government would pay out £400 million to help councils and housing associations remove dangerous cladding from tower blocks.

The cause of the Grenfell Tower disaster – where flames ripped through the Kensington and Chelsea high rise block in June last year – was later identified as cladding panels on the outside of the building which were not fire resistant. An inquiry into the Grenfell fire began last Monday.

Sandwell Council has 55 tower blocks in the borough. The council did not remove any cladding from the blocks, however it removed aluminium composite material (ACM) panels around balconies and some windows at four blocks immediately following notification of a test failure.

Work to replace them with an upgraded fire resistant material was completed early this year. The blocks affected were Astbury Court and Lawrence Court, in Brandhall, Oldbury, and Neale House and Macauley House, in West Bromwich.

Councillor Carmichael said:

"Having witnessed the tragic events unfold at Grenfell Tower we felt it right to use our own resources to move quickly to provide reassurance to residents. We are waiting for further details from the Government on which aspects of the work we have done will be covered by this fund."

Students in visit to get gothic taste

SCHOOL pupils in the region visited a gothic home to enrich their knowledge of the literary genre.

Year 9 students from Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy visited the home as part of the English department's Project Atmosphere.

Ninety students visited Haden Hill House at Cradley Heath over the course of three days to enrich their knowledge of gothic styles of writing. Students participated in a number of activities, including taking a gothic tour of the house.

The project will help inform the students' end-of-term fictional writing assignment, part of which will require them to write an opening for their own gothic novels. Marie McMahon, executive principal at the academy, said: "OSCA students are very fortunate to benefit from such a wide range of enrichment activities, and I know many especially loved the macabre."

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Practice principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS Eng (GDC 108353) with patient Lynn Jones.

'One-stop' dental services have Lynn

Singing for joy

LYNN Jones lives life at a hundred miles an hour, her days punctuated with gardening in her village home, classes for Pilates and keep-fit, reaching for the high notes in her local Sing for Fun choir and planning her next holiday.

"I can't sing, but its an hour-and-a-half of pure joy," she declares.

Admitting to being only the slightest bit older than her 70th milestone, she is the perfect example of all that's great about British country life retirement.

Intelligent, full of energy and laughing easily, she admits to being driven to do things – lots of things.

"Life is for living and Keith [husband] and myself embrace retirement. I'm always on the go, I've always got something on and I need things with me to be right," she says.

Her conversation is light and shares with an eager enthusiasm plans for a month's adventure in Canada.

"We want to do the whole thing . . . Vancouver, Banff, the glacial lakes, the Rockies," she adds.

Unaware

But as she relaxes in the rest room at North Street Dental and Implant Clinic, her upbeat demeanour momentarily changes.

"I'm very difficult to live with when my teeth are not right.

Just as the rest of my health needs to be right, so do my teeth. Isn't that right, Keith!" she declares.

Lynn was unaware of problems with her teeth until a regular check-up revealed an upper prosthetic, secured on four mini implants, was not seating correctly. She was originally referred to the dentist who had undertaken the implant work.

"Unfortunately he had retired," adds the former media employee and member of a public partnership that contributed to the BBC's purposes remit.

"It was my neighbour who recommended I should see Steven Burchell after his wife had received implants at the clinic," she recalls.

> 'The service I have received has been excellent and worth every penny.'

Unexpectedly, Lynn found further approval while waiting for a delayed homebound flight at the Palma Airport, Majorca.

"Sitting next to us was a lady just making conversation. I asked how far she had to travel after the plane landed and said she lived in Dudley. I mentioned that I was due to see a dentist there.

"Right away she asked 'would that be Steven Burchell?'

"'That's where I go'," she added.

Principal Steven DipCDT RCS(Eng) GDC 108353, adds: "We will not carry out any non-essential surgical procedure and there was no need to replace the mini implants.

"We did, however, provide a new prescription for both upper and lower prosthetics and the outcome is a very happy one with natural aesthetics and excellent function."

Praising the "complete appointment" experience, Lynn explains: "I was able to see Owain [clinical lead dentist], have time with Sophie the hygienist, see Steven Burchell and Steve [Morris, advanced dental technician] to get the prosthetics professionally cleaned. It's an invaluable service and for someone like me, who could be travelling for more than an hour to get here

"The service I have received has been excellent and worth every penny," she says.

> 'The complete appointment system is invaluable.'
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Lydia focuses on making difference for patients

STARTING as a healthcare apprentice 16 years ago, intent on making a difference to patients, Lydia Jones is now one of the youngest directors working for the NHS.

The 33-year-old has just been appointed as Director of Therapies at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust (SWBH).

Lydia started her journey at the Trust at a very young age and worked her way up the ranks. She explained: "I started my apprenticeship at the Trust when I was 17-years-old.

"And thanks to the support I received, I was not only able to finish the programme, but I went on to complete my university degree with first-class honours in physiotherapy and in December I will graduate with an NHS leadership master's degree.

NHS HEROES

ONCE again we focus some of our time on the quiet heroes of the NHS, from a wide variety of backgrounds doing a wide variety of jobs.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust is one of the Black Country's largest NHS organisations.

It employs 7,500 people, many of whom live locally.

Last year, the trust provides care from 150 locations.

This week we highlight:
LYDIA JONES
Director of Therapies

Cardiac

"It has been a challenging, but rewarding journey and I couldn't thank the Trust, my mentors, and colleagues enough for supporting me all the way."

She added: "Whilst completing my physiotherapy degree, during university breaks, I worked in cardiac rehab at City Hospital. After graduating, I was offered a job as a physiotherapist at the Trust. I enjoy looking after patients and helping them maximise their potential. There is no better feeling than seeing patients achieve their goals and regain confidence.

"By moving into a senior leadership role, it gives me the opportunity to influence large scale change, develop patient services, and ensure patients receive seamless care across their pathway, which can impact hundreds of patients in a positive way – which is what motivated me to become a leader within the NHS."

Lydia recalled the time when she was an apprentice: "I loved every minute of it. I completed apprenticeship placements within admin and clerical, care assistant and therapy assistant roles across the Trust. This enabled me to gain numerous skills whilst realising my passion for physiotherapy."

So what will be Lydia's goals for this new role as a director? She explained: "My new role will see me working closely with our partners, such as patient groups, clinical commissioning groups, voluntary services, community services and GPs to deliver a seamless integrated service for our patients, ensuring our care pathways are designed to deliver patient centred care. As I'm new in the role, I'm taking stock of the services we deliver and discussing with the teams, patients and our partners opportunities to improve our services. Building positive working relationships is really important for integration so this is another focus."

So who is Lydia's inspiration? "My NHS Hero is Fiona Shorney, group director of operations for Primary Care, Community and Therapies at SWBH. She is well-respected for her knowledge, professionalism and passion in making a difference to patients. She is a good role model and supported me to develop."

Despite her busy schedule at work, Lydia loves spending her spare time playing her favourite sport, golf. She said: "I love it and I try to play weekly with my family and friends, at my local club Dartmouth. Last year, I was lucky enough to claim the club's Ladies Rose Bowl title."

ADVERTORIAL

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The business moved to its present base 20 years ago. Carera offer a full range of windows and doors and also install a full range of conservatories, orangeries and living spaces.

Happy

The company prides itself on having a depth of knowledge in all aspects of the products it offers and industry regulations. The company is fully conversant with all current regulations within the industry. A key aim is to provide a level of customer service that is second to none. More than 70 per cent of all Carera Windows' home sales come via personal recommendation from happy clients, which number many thousands. It takes pride in completing every project to the highest standard.

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The company's showroom at its base is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and Saturday, 10am to 4pm. It offers a wide range of products in various sizes and colours, manufactured using PVCu, aluminium, GRP and hardwood. Carera also installs entrance doors, sliding patio doors, french double doors and porches.

Carera Windows was started by owner and managing director Mark Crumpton in 1989, originally from home as a small enterprising double glazing company supplying the local area. Its housing association glazing contracts and commercial premises work now also takes the business across the country. Carera prides itself on offering honest and professional expert advice, installing 100 per cent high quality products, sensible prices and outstanding customer service.

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Police extend campaign to surrender lethal weapons

POLICE have extended their two-week firearms surrender campaign in a bid to tackle violent crime in the West Midlands.

By Dayna Farrington

West Midlands Police's campaign has been extended up until Sunday.

The force has seen 72 firearms handed in so far during the campaign. Weapons can be surrendered at any of their stations, including Wolverhampton, Bloxwich, Brierley Hill, Birmingham and West Bromwich.

They can also be handed in by calling West Midlands Police on 101 and arranging for officers to make home visits.

So far in 2018, West Midlands Police has taken 53 firearms off the streets amid 45 reported firearms discharges, compared to 62 in the same period last year.

The force's last surrender saw nearly 250 potentially lethal weapons and ammunition handed in – including more than 100 working firearms such as rifles, shotguns, revolvers and handguns. In addition, silencers, starting pistols, air weapons and two deactivated machine guns including an SKS 7 and a 'Tommy gun' were taken into local police stations across the force area.

Det Insp Rod Rose, from the force's CID prevent team, said: "Although enforcement activity is important, it is vital that police, partners and the community work together to stop young people being involved in violent crime and gang activity before it gets to that stage.

"There is significant community support for this activity, and we're working with other agencies as well to try and make our towns and cities safe for local people.

"We realise that peer pressure, family breakdown and many other factors can have a bearing on why a young person follows a gang lifestyle, when other opportunities could be explored with the right direction."

Homes auction sees prices soar

A HOUSE topped its expected price by £101,000 in the latest property auction held at Aston Villa's Villa Park stadium.

SDL Auctions Bigwood's May auction raised £16.4 million, with strong bidding for residential lots.

The three bedroomed, semi-detached house at 54 Witley Avenue in Halesowen was offered with a guide price of more than £70,000 and when the hammer fell it had sold for £171,000.

A four bedroomed, semi-detached house, at 4 Thompson Street in Willenhall, had a guide of £75,000 and the hammer finally fell for £158,000.

On top of these, a semi-detached three bedroomed house in Wolverhampton, at 25 Oaklands Green in Bilston, which had a guide price of £19,000 to £24,000, sold for £97,000.

The next SDL Auctions Bigwood auction at Aston Villa is on July 18. For more, see www.sdlauctions.co.uk/property-auctions/

Mayor Joy to focus on health charities

Newly-elected Sandwell Mayor Councillor Joy Edis, left, and Deputy Mayor Councillor Carol Goult

THE new Mayor of Sandwell has announced she will be raising funds for two local health causes during her mayoral year. Friar Park ward Councillor Joy Edis was announced as the new first citizen of Sandwell last Tuesday.

Councillor Carol Goult, who represents the Bristnall ward, is the new Deputy Mayor. A vote of thanks were also passed during the meeting to the outgoing mayor Ahmadul Haque MBE and deputy mayor Susan Eaves.

Councillor Edis said: "I am honoured and privileged to have been elected as Mayor of Sandwell." She will raise funds for the Wood Green Academy Defibrillator Appeal and the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust – Your Trust Charity, Maternity and Neonatal Appeal.

Councillor Edis has represented Friar Park since 1999. He consort for the year is her son Matthew Edis. Councilor Goult's consort is her husband, Stephen. To find out how to donate to the Mayor's charities, call 0121 569 3041 or email mayors_parlour@sandwell.gov.uk.

Firms and workers set to be evicted

DOZENS of workers are to be evicted from a business park to make way for a packaging company's £15m expansion plans.

Birmingham City Council cabinet chiefs agreed to make a 'compulsory purchase order' (CPO) for Phoenix Business Park in Tyseley which is home to numerous small storage firms collectively employing between 50 to 100 people.

But some of the firms have been branded a 'nuisance' by Euro Packaging next door, which claimed they created a potential risk of environmental harm.

The company wants to expand its global HQ on to the park which would expand its 480-strong workforce to around 800 people. They warned if they could not develop the site they would be forced to move its operation out of Birmingham.

For more than a year they have tried to negotiate with the tenants to secure the lease of the 3.7 acre plot but to no avail.

Foodhall to be nearest open M&S

AFTER announcing the Walsall Marks & Spencer's shop is set to close after 84 years, the recently-opened foodhall near Ikea in Wednesbury, will be the nearest place for M&S food fans to pick up their goodies.

The move is part of a nationwide cull by the department store chain. More than 90 staff in Walsall face the loss of their jobs if the closure goes ahead.

Marks & Spencer says it will close more than 100 stores by 2022 as it accelerates a transformation programme that will see thousands of jobs put at risk.

The closures will affect its clothing and home stores, which have under-performed for several years.

Andy Barber, head of region for West Midlands at M&S, said: "Proposing to close M&S Walsall has been a difficult decision.

"Over the coming weeks we will be speaking to each one individually about what is right for them.

"Customers can continue to shop with us at our nearby Wednesbury Foodhall which is just three miles away and offers our popular M&S.com collect in store service."

The Walsall store has been a mainstay for the town's shoppers since it opened in Park Street on June 1, 1934.

The branch was moved into the Saddlers Centre in 1980.

Tunisia terror attack widow dies, 74, of 'a broken heart'

A WIDOW who lost her husband, son and grandson in the Tunisian terror attacks of 2015 has died aged 74.

Maureen Evans from Wednesbury lost her 19-year-old grandson Joel, son Adrian Evans, 44, and 78-year-old husband Patrick Evans – Suzy Evan's son, brother and father – in the beach shooting three years ago. Only Suzy's youngest son Owen, Mrs Evans' grandson, who was just 16 at the time, came back.

The 49-year-old said she was 'heartbroken' her mother had died, adding: "She truly tried, but her broken heart could never get over what happened and our horrific loss."

Mrs Evans worked various different jobs throughout her life but later became a carer and looked after elderly people in their homes, retiring at the age of 60.

She married Patrick Evans at Holy Cross Catholic Church in West Bromwich, the same church the three men's funerals were held at.

Suzy added: "She was the hub of our family, a true character and what true family love is made of. Mom and Dad had a loving life together for over 50 years. Both had conquered illness and both lived for their family.

Peacefully

"She was a great mom and, along with dad, meant me and my brother had a wonderful childhood. She also became a second mom to her grandsons and would have done anything for them.

"My Mom has struggled. She lost her only son, her first grandson and her husband – no medicine was ever going to fix that. With poor health and a broken heart she died peacefully. My only hope is she is now back with her boys."

The grandmother died the day before the family attended a ceremonial service at National Memorial Arboretum, where a new memorial to victims of overseas terrorism was unveiled.

Maureen Evans and her husband Patrick

Suzy, her son Owen – now 19, her best friend Louise, and Mrs Evans's sisters Joyce and Barbara went to the service as Suzy said she felt her mother would have wanted them to go. Suzy and Owen met Prince Charles and spoke with him. about their charity Smile for Joel, set up in memory of Patrick, Adrian and Joel to try and help support families who are victims of murder and terrorism.

Royal wedding knees-up at lunch club

Volunteers from a lunch club for pensioners organised a royal wedding-themed tea party to mark the occasion. Wednesbury Town Hall was transformed with a red, white and blue colour scheme for the event organised by the Knights of Wednesbury. Around 40 guests dressed up and enjoyed a lunch paid for by donations from firms.

Metro link is high on the agenda

THERE'S a busy year ahead for the re-elected leader of Dudley Council, who will have the Midland Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill high on his agenda.

Councillor Patrick Harley says he hopes to build on a successful 12 months in a "pivotal year ahead".

He announced some new faces to his decision making cabinet at the annual council meeting.

Councillor Harley said his new cabinet would be tasked with overseeing some huge programmes of work and making key decisions over the next 12 months. That includes the £353 million Midland Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.

He also said a key focus would be tackling the state of the borough's roads.

£350 boost for causes

THE Wednesbury Community Awards helped to raise more than £350 for the outgoing Mayor of Sandwell's charities.

The money, for the Midlands Air Ambulance charity and Your Trust charity was raised through a raffle and donations at the awards ceremony.

Mayor Ahmadul Haque said: "I would like to thank everyone in Wednesbury who has generously donated to my charities."

Peace and love reigns at homecoming concert

It was a triumphant homecoming for Peace in Birmingham with a full house at the O2 Academy 2 venue Photo by Jonnie Craig

Peace, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ON the title track of the new Peace album frontman Harry Koisser sings 'Kindness Is The New Rock 'n' Roll', but the old rock 'n' roll remains exhilarating when performed by this band of adopted Brummies.

On the final night of a 15-date UK tour to launch their third album, it was a triumphant homecoming for the ferocious four playing their psychedelic-tinged guitar rock to a full house at a hot and heaving O2 Academy 2.

The smaller room added to the atmosphere and may have reminded long term fans of those early days in Digbeth when the Worcestershire band set the city abuzz with their weaving guitars and Koisser's Bolan-like quavering vocals on their songs about 'lovesick losers'.

On a stage bedecked with flowers, Peace reigned supreme and there was plenty of love for them from the crowd, moshing from the off when Koisser and co opened up with fans' favourites Ocean's Eye and Bloodshake.

In fact, they had been seen on stage earlier when they launched their own backstage invasion of the set by main support act Whenyoung to sing-along with the promising Irish trio, dressed in that band's favoured boiler suits. Nice flossing skills by Peace guitarist Doug Castle!

Peace's 90-minute set featured lots of songs from all three albums. Highlights included their latest anthem Power, savage versions of Money and I'm A Girl, swaggering rocker Shotgun Hallelujah, the soaring sonic delight of Higher Than The Sun, plus impressive new songs Silverlined and Kindness Is The New Rock 'n' Roll.

Harry in jeans and a silk red shirt (or was it a pyjama top?) was flanked by Doug and his brother Sam on bass, with drummer Dom Boyce sat behind propelling the sound. Harry was in a mood to chat between songs and even invited 17-year-old fan Ed up on stage to celebrate his birthday.

He also performed a new version of old favourite Perfect Skin, on introducing California Daze revealed that it had been written a stone's throw from the venue and gave a gorgeous solo rendition of Float Forever.

It ended where it began for Peace, with their indie rock classic Lovesick. Peace and Love, the perfect combination. LEON BURAKOWSKI

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Suspect is charged after man found dead

A MAN has been charged with murder after a man was shot to death in the region.

Anib Khan, aged 23, was arrested by Kent Police as he tried to board a ferry in Dover last Tuesday, after the incident in Handsworth.

A 23-year-old woman arrested on suspicion of assisting an offender at the port, has been released pending further investigation. Taimoor Zaheer, 22, was found dead in Maxwell Avenue last Tuesday.

The victim was found in a car just before 5pm. Nothing could be done to save him and he was pronounced dead at the scene.

His family have paid tribute to their loving son, brother and uncle. In a statement they said: "His loss has left a void in our family that will never be filled. The only thing that will help us get through these testing times is knowing that justice will be served."

Khan appeared before Birmingham Magistrates last Friday. Det Insp Paul Joyce from the Homicide Unit at West Midlands Police added: "We have had an overwhelming amount of information from members of the local community which has enabled some really swift progress to be made.

"This charge is a significant step forward, but the murder investigation is far from over. We are dealing with the fatal shooting of a young man; his family are being supported by specialist officers at this tragic time, and I implore those with information to do the right thing and come forward if they haven't already."

If you have any information to assist the ongoing murder enquiry please contact West Midlands Police on 101, to remain anonymous call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Lorry driver faces more time in jail

A BLACK COUNTRY lorry driver who has already served a jail term for his part in the theft of more than £160,000 worth of whisky could find himself back behind bars.

Paramjit Singh had pleaded guilty at Warwick Crown Court last year to the theft of the booze from the Co-op distribution centre on the Prologis Park in Coventry.

Singh, aged 32, of Mattox Road, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, was jailed for 12 months – but a hearing under the Proceeds of Crime Act was adjourned for an investigation into his finances.

And at the resumed hearing the judge was told it was agreed by the prosecution and the defence that Singh, who has now served his sentence, had available assets of £10,000.

So Recorder Robert Spencer-Bernard ordered Singh, whose benefit was said to have been £100,000, to pay £10,000 under a Proceeds of Crime Act confiscation order.

He gave him three months to pay up or face a further six months in jail if it is not paid in that time.

Singh had pleaded guilty on the basis that he had no idea of the goods he had been recruited to collect, or of their value.

But following a 'trial of issue' in April last year Judge Richard Griffith-Jones rejected the suggestion that he did not know what was being loaded into his trailer.

Singh's barrister Jasvir Mann said he had been used by others as a driver and was not one of those behind the plan.

£1.8k raised for cancer research

A CHARITY lunch raised £1,800 for vital research into treatments for cancer. The popular annual event organised by Cancer Research UK's Wyre Forest Committee at the Hallmark Hotel in Stourport on May 15 was attended by 132 guests.

Chairman Peter Tomlinson said: "Our guest speaker, Professor Lawrence Young, a dear friend and supporter of our committee, spoke with his usual enthusiasm about the fantastic work being carried out."

Police remain on the hunt for paedophile imam who escaped abroad during trial

Still at large – Hafiz Rahman

By Dayna Farrington

A PAEDOPHILE imam who evaded justice when he went on the run during his trial more than a year and a half ago, is still wanted by police, according to chiefs.

Hafiz Rahman, who preyed on two young girls at a Black Country mosque in the 1980s, slipped through the net and fled to Bangladesh after claiming that he was too ill to attend court.

Rahman, of Ballard Road, Netherton, was found guilty of five charges of indecent assault back in October 2016.

But after the jury found him guilty and he was sentenced to 11-and-a-half years in his absence, Rahman inexplicably managed to board a flight to Bangladesh under the noses of the police to avoid being sentenced.

Rahman was the imam at Queens Cross mosque in Cradley Heath and was convicted of historic crimes against the girls, who he was supposed to be giving religious instruction.

But, a West Midlands Police spokesman confirmed that he was is still wanted by police – almost 20 months on.

Hopes of his capture were raised last year when files were passed to extradition experts but it is believed he has yet to return to the UK.

Mike Woods, a spokesman for the police force, said: "Enquiries are still on-going – he's still wanted by us."

While a spokesman for the Crown Prosecution Service said there was no further update on the case.

One of his victims previously told the Express & Star that the imam's escape has prevented her from moving on and believes he may never be found.

She said: "It was a bittersweet victory. Others now know what he was doing but I haven't got closure."

Met opening date of 2020 now impossible, say chiefs

Report by David Cosgrove

HEALTH bosses have said a 2020 opening for the £350m Midland Met Hospital now looks 'impossible' as plans to restart work on the site have 'stalled'.

Previously chiefs said they hoped the delayed build can be completed by 2020.

But Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust's chief executive Toby Lewis has admitted efforts to transfer a contract from failed construction giant Carillion to another provider have hit the buffers.

An opening date of 2022 would be four years behind the original opening date of this autumn (2018).

Warley MP John Spellar described the delay as 'shocking news for patients and dedicated staff'. The hospital, in Grove Lane, Smethwick is around two-thirds complete but has been left untouched since January when Wolverhampton-based Carillion went into liquidation.

Engineering problems had already seen the opening date back before the collapse of Carillion saw work grind to a halt.

Mr Lewis told the Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star earlier this year that it was 'crucial' the new hospital was open by 2020 – but that goal now looks set to be missed. He outlined the hospital's current plight in a note to Sandwell Council's health and wellbeing board.

Progress

This says: "In March we sought to execute a strategy together of restarting work and transferring the Carillion employees relevant to the build to a new construction provider.

"That strategy has stalled and now looks unlikely to progress in its current form.

"That makes it impossible to see that a delay can be mitigated to 2020, which was the Trust's intended best case solution.

"The options that remain for us all make an opening date for the new build of 2022 the most likely scenario.

"All parties involved remain committed to the Midland Metropolitan Hospital, which will open and provide outstanding facilities locally for many generations to come.

"The delay is deeply disappointing and frustrating, and the hiatus over finding a solution is likewise concerning, however, the [health and wellbeing board] should be assured that there is no question mark over the new build.

"There remains uncertainty over when and how. That uncertainty will now take some time to resolve, because a willing partner must be sourced and funded."

Councillor Bob Lloyd said he was disappointed the completion date looks set to be pushed back, as the new hospital is crucial for the borough.

He urged the Government to step up efforts to get the work schedule back on track.

Councillor Lloyd said: "We have been working on this plan for years – the reconfiguration of the hospital is a major plan and it will stop us having two sites.

"It is a massive project which needs to happen as soon as possible.

"They really need to get on with it – the collapse of Carillion wasn't the fault of the people of Sandwell but they are the ones being affected."

Thousands turn streets into a riot of Pride

Revellers take a selfie as the massive parade goes past. Picture: @WMFS_pics

Chief Constable Dave Thompson enjoying the day

The crowds seen in the streets during the festival on Saturday

THOUSANDS of people took to the streets of Birmingham for the city's annual Pride event at the weekend, which saw a good proportion of the summer sunshine.

The city was a riot of colour as the two-day event began on Saturday with a parade through the city centre to the Gay Village in Hurst Street.

Huge crowds watched colourful floats in the procession, with large cheers greeting staff from West Midlands Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service and West Midlands Fire Service. West Midlands Police's chief constable Dave Thompson was among those enjoying the celebrations.

He tweeted: "I attend pride in my own time as do the staff in the parade.

"[It is] Important to show police are from all parts of society and as a force we are inclusive.

"The event and our presence builds trust in policing.

"That's a big part of my job. The uniform shows it's from the top."

Headline artists at the festival included Rudimental, Jake Shears from the Scissor Sisters and Beth Ditto. At the start of Saturday there were overcast skies and drizzle turning to heavy rain but the weather soon brightened up for revellers to enjoy the day.

The festivities continued on Sunday despite thunderstorms as bars and restaurants were packed with people around the Southside area.

Funfair rides and music performances also brought out the crowds.

The UK's Eurovision star SuRie was also performing on the main stage.

Is plan a fast lane to freeing traffic?

PETER MADELEY looks at the latest scheme for a western route to take traffic through our region

IT is a proposed new stretch of motorway that some hope will ease congestion on the clogged roads of the West Midlands.

The Western Strategic Route is under consideration by transport bosses, who are looking at ways to improve sluggish travel times on the region's roads that they say are having a detrimental impact on the local economy.

The planned route has been revealed in a report to the West Midlands Combined Authority's transport delivery committee by Midlands Connect, the body tasked with developing the transport strategy for the wider region.

While bosses say that no route has yet been finalised, the map shows that the new motorway would be likely to run along a similar route to the Western Orbital scheme, also know as the Wolverhampton bypass, which was first proposed three decades ago but never got built due to environmental concerns.

It starts in the south of the region at Junction 4a of the M5 at Bromsgrove. It heads towards Kidderminster before travelling through South Staffordshire, passing Stourbridge, Dudley and Wolverhampton to its east.

The route then joins up with Junction 2 of the M54 near the i54 business park. The route would effectively create an orbital motorway network, connecting the M54, M6 Toll, M42 and M5, with the M6 running through the centre.

The proposed path of the Western Strategic Route is shown in red

Plans for the Western Orbital scheme were first revealed in May 1988. At the time it was expected to cost £190 million and was initially put forward by the Department for Transport as a solution to congestion on the M6. The proposals met with a storm of protests, with councillors in Staffordshire warning that the motorway would have a devastating effect on countryside.

Lord Patrick Cormack, the then-Conservative MP for South Staffordshire, said at the time: "Naturally I am anxious to do everything I can to minimise the destructive impact of the road."

The plans were ditched in 1996 by John Major's Government due to a lack of interest from the private sector and environmental concerns, before returning in reduced form in 2001 as the Wolverhampton Bypass.

By that time the expected cost of the scheme was £500m, but two years later it was killed off again.

Academy students go extra mile to graduate

Academy students seen at Cardiff University

STUDENTS made the more than 100-mile journey from the Black Country to Cardiff to graduate.

Twenty-one students from Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy in Tividale took a trip to Cardiff University to mark their graduation from a charity scholar programme.

Pupils took a tour of the university grounds before graduating from The Brilliant Club's Scholars Programme scheme – which runs in several academies across Ormiston Academies Trust and involves six university-style tutorials, two study skills lectures and a final assignment.

The Brilliant Club charity, which widens access to top universities for students from non-selective state schools, has seen than 75 per cent of students from the Trust's academies supported throughout the partnership.

Marie McMahon, executive principal of Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy, said: "I am so proud of all of The Brilliant Club graduates, who worked so diligently to produce university level essays and to score so highly on the work produced."

Two jobs moonlighter will wait to know fate

A CHEAT'S claim that moonlighting 22 hours a week for eight years did not affected his full time job with Sandwell council, has been called into question.

By John Scott

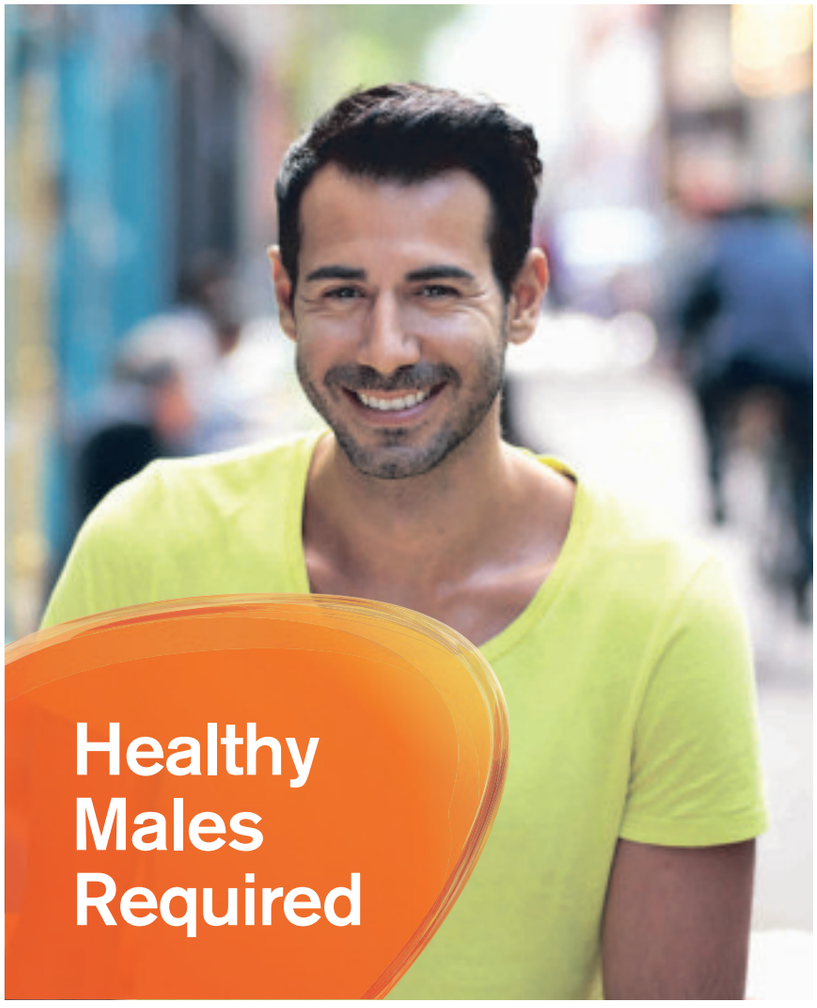
Peter Walker admitted defrauding his employer by not doing his work as contracted after he took the post with the NHS at the same time without telling his bosses.

But the 46-year-old maintained the local authority had not lost out, insisting he satisfactorily completed all the tasks of the 37-hour week job by putting in the time after hours. This basis of plea was not accepted when Walker appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court for sentence.

Walker has also confessed to submitting timesheets he knew were untrue or misleading because he was employed by the Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust as a counsellor at the same time as earning up to £30,000-a-year either as a learning and development officer or people and talent development consultant at Sandwell. The council did not accept the basis of plea but were not in a position to provide the court with evidence that challenged or disproved it due to the passage of time.

He also pocketed tens of thousands of pounds in September 2014 after successfully applying for voluntary redundancy. The council argue he would have been sacked and forced to leave without a pay off if it was known he was moonlighting and will press for the money to be paid back.

Judge Berlin adjourned the case to a date to be fixed.



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The maintenance crew at RAF Perton

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Personnel of No.28 EFTS RAF Wolverhampton

Pupil/ instructor in a Tiger Moth at RAF Wolverhampton

Avro Anson aircraft from RAF Halfpenny Green

Taking flight to mark Royal Air Force centenary

MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

ON April 1, 1918, the World's first independent air force was born, the Royal Air Force.

And on Sunday, the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre will unveil an exhibition of the RAF's impact locally.

On the first day of its existence the RAF only had one airfield in the vicinity, at Perton, where Perton Park Golf Club now is.

Strange

It was little more than a large grass field, but remained Wolverhampton's de facto airfield until the Municipal Airport was built at Pendeford, and the RAF had no local units until 1938.

Then strange shapes started appearing in the fields north of Albrighton, as RAF Cosford was built, the home of No.2 School of Technical Training and No.9 Maintenance Unit. Cosford has been an enduring presence ever since, and has been granted the Freedom of the City.

At the outbreak of war the Municipal Airport was taken over as RAF Wolverhampton, the home for No.28 Elementary Flying Training School and their Tiger Moth trainers. For a time there were 105 of these on strength and to relieve the pressure on Wolverhampton's grass runways, also used by Boulton Paul Aircraft, a Relief Landing Ground was built at Pilaton Hall, named RAF Penkridge.

The RAF also returned to Perton, but the other side of Wrottesley Park Road, and built a new three-runway airfield as a fighter base. Plans changed and RAF Perton became a Relief Landing Ground for the trainers from RAF Tern Hill, then RAF Shawbury. The redundant accommodation buildings were taken over and expanded for the Dutch Army, housing the Princess Irene Brigade.

Not far away another new training base was built between Bobbington and Halfpenny Green. Named initially after the former, it was later renamed RAF Halfpenny Green, housing the Boths and then Ansons of No.3 Air Observers School. It closed at the end of the war, but then re-opened at the time of the Korean War.

A little further away there were Initial Training Bases at Bridgnorth and Hednesford, and training airfields at Wheaton Aston, Seighford and Hixon. Only RAF Cosford remains, where the annual Air Show will also highlight the Junior Service's 100 years of history.

RAF Cosford receiving the Freedom of Wolverhampton

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IRA bomb survivor Donald enjoys 80th

MORE than 35 years after the IRA's devastating Hyde Park bombings, a survivor has celebrated his 80th birthday.

Donald Mills was injured in the explosion in London that killed 11 soldiers and seven horses on July 20, 1982.

He suffered damage to the internal membrane in his chest and was unable to walk after nerve endings in his legs plus his hands were damaged.

He also developed kidney problems meaning he needs dialysis three times a week.

Despite what he has been through, 36 years on from the atrocity, the father-of-two enjoyed 'one of the best days since Christmas' as he was treated to a birthday tea party last Tuesday with friends.

Hyde Park bomb survivor Donald Mills celebrates his 80th birthday with

Lucky

Mr Mills, originally from Birmingham, now lives with his friend of 17 years, Janet Castree, aged 65, in Coven, near Wolverhampton, and has spoken out about his experience after the Westminster terror attacks last year in the hope it will help others who have suffered at the hands of terrorists.

He said: "It had been one of the best days since Christmas. It was a good old-fashioned tea party I enjoyed with my friends, whom I want to thank for coming. Janet has taken care of me and if not for her I would not have survived. I feel like a very lucky man to still be alive. The Westminster attacks sparked a lot of memories for me and it is something that you can never forget.

"I suffer because of what happened but I am happy I spoke out because I am proud I have been able to help others." Mr Mills ran a sweet shop in 1960 called Mills Food Store in Pretoria Road, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, which later became a grocery store.

He is originally from Nechells, Birmingham, and also used to drive to London regularly to deliver military supplies to Kensington barracks when he worked for delivery services Riders Express, based in Birmingham.

Mr Mills married his wife, Valerie, in 1961 and they had a long and happy marriage, enjoying to walks and going camping.

Valerie had motor neurone disease and died in 2001.

Janet said: "It was a beautiful day and it was great to put on a tea party for Don because it was a chance for him to catch up with his friends.

"He has been through lots in his life and he is a very intelligent but he has helped a lot of people."

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GP surgery plans are a step closer with funds

LONG-AWAITED plans for a new health centre have taken a step forward after being backed by a funding body.

The scheme for a new GP surgery in Wednesbury has gained the support of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and council bosses said a planning application was now imminent.

A new medical centre has been in the pipeline for land on King Street for years but has yet to come to fruition due to issues with funding.

The LEP has asked for a full business case to be drawn up and will then consider an application for funding.

Councillor Paul Moore, regeneration boss at Sandwell Council, said a formal planning application was expected before the end of the year. Six council homes will also be built on the site.

Bosses at the authority have been keen to deliver a new health centre for the town but after years of delays there had been fears it would never happen.

Councillor Moore said: "We are making good progress, working closely with Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), on plans for this vacant site in King Street, Wednesbury. Our plan is to provide six, much-needed new council homes and a brand new health centre for the local community.

"We are also finalising a planning application for the scheme which will be submitted in the coming months."

A medical centre was first mooted in 2009. Fresh life was breathed into the scheme when council agreed to construct the facility as part of a deal with the CCG which would then see the authority be reimbursed.

65ft mast is compared to Tolkien villain

A 65FT TALL phone mast near JRR Tolkien's childhood home has been compared to the work of evil Lord of the Rings villain Sauron. Vodafone has obtained planning permission for the monopole at Cole Bank Road in Moseley despite significant concerns from Birmingham Museums Trust.

They argued it was too close to the Grade II listed Sarehole Mill as well as the fantasy author's former home on Wake Green Road. A summary of their objection said: "Sarehole Mill is a national asset with connections to Birmingham's industrial history and to the internationally loved stories of JRR Tolkien whose childhood home is nearby ."[The mast] would be extremely obtrusive and form a blight on the historic surroundings.

"[It is] not far from Tolkien's childhood home on Wake Green Road, he hated the desecration of beautiful landscapes by ugly and inappropriate development, I suspect he would see the mast as an example of the work of Saruman or Sauron, and would not want this installation to be inflicted on his beloved Shire."

The trust also argued it would obstruct the annual festival celebrating the Lord of the Rings and Hobbit writer.

There were 11 formal objections submitted to Birmingham City Council while councillors Liz Clements, Tim Huxtable and Lou Robson all opposed. A 49-name petition against it was also submitted at a late stage. The council's planning committee approved the mast on Thursday.

Parks host half term play days

A BLACK Country charity is running a series of free play sessions this week.

Groundwork West Midlands is behind Let's Play Sandwell events in parks across Oldbury, Tipton and Wednesbury, running until Friday, between 11am and 4pm every day. The sessions, funded by Sandwell Council, will give youngsters aged six to 12 the chance to get stuck into a range of exciting activities including sports, scavenger hunts and arts and crafts.

Police catch 2,500 motorists across the borough with mobile speed camera traps

Report by Alex Ross

MOBILE speed cameras snapped more than 2,500 motorists across Sandwell in the last year – including 1,981 next to deactivated static cameras.

The marked enforcement vans caught speeding drivers at 15 locations. In total, 2,572 tickets were issued in 2017. It comes five years after all static 'housed' speed cameras were turned off.

Most tickets were issued from five locations along the A41 Black Country New Road. Mobile cameras located near to static cameras next to Swan Island and the roundabout junction for A4196 Old Meeting Lane caught 96 and 75 motorists respectively.

Cameras at three other former static locations along the route caught 1,549 drivers.

Councillor Peter Hughes said: "There needs to be a review of the speed limits along the dual carriageway as it is confusing with the changing limits. I agree with speed cameras in certain instances, they need to be on motorways, but in terms of dual carriageways it has to be aligned with something else such as signage and consistency of limits.

"It feels along the Black Country New Road the cameras are being used as a trap."

Also high up on the list of roads where the most motorists were seen speeding was the A4031 Trinity Way in West Bromwich, between The Expressway and Kendrick Way, where 320 drivers were caught.

On the A462 Darlaston Road in Wednesbury, 178 drivers were caught and on the A41 Birmingham Road, next to The Hawthorns, 142 were snared.

Twenty-four motorists were caught on the A457 Soho Way in Smethwick and seven on Cranford Street in Smethwick and the A461 Dudley Port in Horsley Heath, Tipton.

The figures, from a Freedom of Information request, revealed mobile cameras are being positioned at the sites of turned-off static cameras.

Claire Waring, from the West Midlands Police Camera Enforcement Unit, said: "There are more than 150 locations where the cameras are used.

"The locations where they are deployed are based on the sites where people have been killed or seriously injured due to a road traffic collision.

"We also enforce at locations where speeds are excessive but no serious injuries have been recorded."

Drivers receive a minimum fine of £100 and three penalty points if caught speeding.

Best year yet as 42m visitors flock to see Brum's sights

Tourism Minister Michael Ellis enjoying a visit to Birmingham's canals

The Natwest T20 Finals Day at Edgbaston Stadium in September proved a major draw for visitors

Birmingham Hippodrome, bringing in the crowds

Dippy the Diplodocus recently arrived in Brum too

By Simon Penfold

BIRMINGHAM'S tourism sector witnessed its most successful year in history last year, with hotel revenue, the number of visitors and the amount they spent all hitting record highs.

Figures just released by the West Midlands Growth Company and research body Global Tourism Solutions (GTS), reveal Birmingham welcomed 41.8 million visitors in 2017.

The amount of money they spent in the area hit £7.1 billion – an increase of more than nine per cent in the space of a year.

Average hotel occupancy stood at 75 per cent, matching the previous record set in 2016, whilst RevPAR (revenue per available room) was £51 in value, the highest figure ever recorded.

The city welcomed the most tourists during September, a month that included major events such as the Natwest T20 Finals Day at Edgbaston Stadium and Birmingham's largest outdoor festival, the Birmingham Weekender.

The region's literary heritage was celebrated as 2017 marked the 80th anniversary of JRR Tolkien's classic fantasy novel The Hobbit. Heritage was also the sub-sector to see the greatest increase in visitor numbers, up 12 per cent on 2016.

The number of full-time equivalent jobs supported by the visitor economy has risen by 7.2 per cent since 2016, from 70,635 to 75,748.

The announcement of the latest figures coincides with a visit to the region from Tourism Minister Michael Ellis. The visit marks the arrival of a prominent new tourism project to the area – England's Waterways, supported by the Discover England Fund.

Cultural

The project, led by the West Midlands Growth Company, is intended to inspire international visitors to explore the canal networks and surrounding cultural offer throughout Birmingham and the wider Midlands region.

Mr Ellis said: "Birmingham is one the UK's leading destinations, with excellent attractions, nightlife and hospitality. Following the hugely successful Commonwealth Games handover and the arrival of Dippy the Diplodocus, this positive tourism trend looks set to continue well into the future.

"The wider Midlands region boasts a charming canal network surrounded by vibrant green spaces and unique heritage attractions. We are pleased to be helping to attract even more people to experience these picturesque waterways through our Discover England Fund."

Over the last 10 years, Birmingham has attracted growing numbers of overnight visitors. The total number of staying visitors has increased by a third (1.2 million) since 2008. The top destinations visitors are travelling from include Ireland, Germany and the US.

Neil Snowball, chief executive of Warwickshire County Cricket Club, said: "The biggest sporting and cultural events come to Birmingham because of the outstanding experience that is provided by the city stakeholders working together in partnership. The warm welcome and logistical ease is something that is reported time and again by visitors to Edgbaston.

"Last year, the stadium hosted five games in the ICC Champions Trophy, England's first ever Day/Night Investec Test match and NatWest T20 Blast Finals Day, which was predicted to have generated around £45 million towards the local economy. We're thrilled that Edgbaston could play such a major role in Birmingham's leisure offering last year.

"With test matches against India, Australia and the ICC Cricket World Cup on the horizon, we can look forward to continued momentum in the city's tourism offering".

Mark Payne, general manager at Park Regis Birmingham, added: "These record-breaking figures highlight the growing potential of the UK's second city.

"Birmingham is home to a thriving food and hospitality offering, with a globally renowned arts and culture scene, underpinned by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and The Birmingham Hippodrome. The recent handover for the 2022 Commonwealth Games has made it very real and clear that Birmingham is the city to watch.

"Due to the increasing number of visitors to the city, The Park Regis Birmingham has been going from strength to strength since opening.

"We have recently broken ground on our new sky-high conferencing suite on Level 16 to accommodate the growing professional community in the city. Birmingham is fast becoming the first choice for delegates – and we can't wait to welcome them."

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Join last voyage of 'unsinkable ship'

He started off in Walsall. But theatrical director Thom Southerland has created one of the biggest theatrical productions of the year with Titanic. As a child, the daring and ambitious former pupil of Barr Beacon School used to watch productions at Birmingham's Hippodrome.

And on Monday he'll return to the Hippodrome for a week-long run with Titanic: The Musical, which ends on June 9.

In the final hour of April 14, 1912, the RMS Titanic, on her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York, collided with an iceberg and 'the unsinkable ship' slowly sank. It was one of the most tragic and infamous disasters of the 20th century. A total of 1,517 men, women and children lost their lives.

Based on real people aboard the most legendary ship in the world, Maury Yeston and Peter Stone's stunning musical focuses on their hopes and aspirations. Unaware of the fate that awaits them, the Third Class immigrants dream of a better life in America, the newly-enfranchised Second Class dream of achieving the lifestyles of the rich and famous, and the millionaire Barons of the First Class dream of their mastery lasting forever.

Thom, a former Express & Star paper boy who delivered newspapers to top up his pocket money, explains: "The musical started life in New York. A composer-lyricist had the idea to do a musical retelling of The Titanic – and most people thought that was the worst idea ever. How could we make a musical of one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century?

"But it is incredible. I heard the score on a CD. It had never been to the UK. The music is not about a ship. It's about the people who were on it."

The musical has been around the world during the past five years, growing each time.

"I can't be more happy than to think this show is touring the UK. It's our story and our legend; there are so many people that associate with it or are fascinated with it. It's because of the people and the stations and everything that people identify with."

The Hippodrome was where it all began for Thom. He was born in Walsall and went there as a kid to watch pantomimes and musicals. "This is the first time one of my shows will head to the Hippodrome. It wells me up when I think about it. I was born in Walsall, went to Barr Beacon School and we had a teacher, Mr Daniels, who would put on school plays. The teachers would let us act and that encouraged me so much."

He went to the theatre as well, in addition to classes for drama. Since then, his work has gone to America and Japan – but never Birmingham.

"When I was in Walsall, I did acting stuff. Then because I didn't think I was good enough to do that professionally, I desperately wanted to be part of it so I turned to directing.

"I remember going to see a show at the Hippodrome with my grandma and she'd say 'it's beautiful music' and I realised there was more than one way to do it. I went and studied as a director and I've just been very fortunate."

When Thom trained as a director, he was always interested in musical theatre. He wanted to redefine the genre, moving away from big, epic shows to ones where the story was at the heart of things.

"Musicals can get a bad rep for being cheesey or old fashioned or not as worthy as plays that are in Stratford-upon-Avon. But I said there's no reason why you can't take a musical as seriously as the RSC."

The greatest tragedy – Titianic: The Musical tells the tale

So he started to put on his own shows in very, very small theatres, meeting the bills with his credit card. Instead of shows playing the London Palladium, he took them to 50-seat theatres and asked actors to play their own instruments.

The rest is history and Thom has become a hot property.

"With Titanic, there was these huge sets they tried to replicate what the titanic looked like. We don't need to see it anymore. So when we see the musical, we see things you don't know. It's all about telling the story. There's no need, like James Cameron did, to make bits up and make fake love affairs up. There was 2,500 people on the ship – you don't have to make it up because those people were all living, breathing human beings who had fascinating stories of their own.

"I always tell the actors when I'm working on it. For half of the show, you think you are going to live a new life in a new world. They were aboard the largest moving object in the world, which was also the most glamorous and luxurious. They were experiencing the happiest day of their life.

> *The music is not about a ship. It's about the people who were on it*

"Everybody who worked there or who had bought a ticket were thrilled. The Titanic was monumental, the best in the world. They had all achieved.

"And then only four days later, they met their fate in the middle of the north Atlantic, through nobody's fault, in my humble opinion. Our job is to pay tribute to the people who sailed in her and understand what she was supposed to do and supposed to represent. Then to lay testament to the people who sailed in her. It's a disrespect to the people who lost their lives to make up fake love stories.

"Personally, I don't think you can comprehend the hugeness of the tragedy unless you bring it down to a parallel, the experience of one human being. Just as we can't understand the horrors of Nazi Germany but we can understand the diary of Anne Frank."

Andy Richardson

● **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

The Lady Boys of Bangkok

Oh boy! It's a saucy start to June at the Grand

DREAMBOYS and Lady Boys add up to a memorable series of one-off concerts at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre to get June off to a saucy start.

Joined by celebrity Jake Quickenden (from The X Factor, I'm A Celebrity... and Dancing On Ice), The Dreamboys strut their stuff on Wednesday (June 6).

Then cabaret favourites The Lady Boys of Bangkok bring their glamour to the Grand on June 7 with their Wonder Women Tour. The glitzy show features the Lady Boys' tributes to Cher, Diana Ross, Shirley Bassey, Lady Gaga and Wonder Woman herself.

Before those shows, more traditional old fashioned fun can be seen at the Lichfield Street venue for three performances from Monday to Tuesday in A Grand Music Hall. Hosted by the Grand's regular panto dame Ian Adams, the variety show features actor Keith Minshull, pianist Guy Rowland, illusionists Van Buren and Allyson, singer Julie Paton and, topping the bill, former Crackerjack and Good Morning Sunday host Don Maclean. There will be prizes for the best 'Good Old Days' costumes.

More nostalgia on Saturday (June 9) when the swing era is recalled with the music of The Glenn Miller Orchestra. The show also features the Moonlight Serenaders, the Swing Time Jivers and the Polka Dots with their tribute to the Andrews Sisters. That will certainly get you 'In The Mood' for some 40s favourites. For more details see grandtheatre.co.uk or call the box office on 01902 429212.

Her heart in Havana – her gig is in Brum

CHART-TOPPING singer Camila Cabello is hitting the road for her first solo tour.

Cabello's Never Be The Same tour follows the immediate success of her self-titled debut album. She will headline Birmingham's O2 on Wednesday (June 6). The Cuban-American singer and songwriter rose to fame as a member of the girl group Fifth Harmony, which was formed during the second season of The X Factor US in 2012. She began to establish herself as a solo artist with the release of several collaborations, including Bad Things with Machine Gun Kelly, which reached number four on the US Billboard Hot 100.

After leaving Fifth Harmony in December 2016, she released the solo single Crying in the Club. Refocusing her sound to Latin-influenced music, her eponymous debut studio album Camila (2018) entered at number one on the US Billboard 200, supported by its lead single Havana, which topped the charts in several countries, including the UK and the US.

She said the success of Havana was empowering: "I think it really gave me a certain buzz of confidence. When you're a new solo artist, people are kind of scared to do stuff that's different because they just want to go with what's already being played on the radio. They want to stick to the formula.

"We didn't even release 'Havana' as a single because no one believed in it enough. They were like 'Oh that's a cool song but it's definitely not what you want as a single from your album.' So when it worked, I was like, 'Nobody really knows anything, so you might as well go with what you love.' It was super-validating. It taught me this huge lesson of going with what you feel and you like."

Jane sails in for sell out shows

Singer and TV presenter Jane McDonald will be playing to full houses when she entertains at Birmingham's New Alexander Theatre next Friday (June 8) and returns to the region at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on September 23. She found fame as a cruise ship singer in reality TV show The Cruise and is celebrating 20 years since she first sailed onto our screens. Now the Wakefield warbler is celebrating winning a Bafta for Channel 5 travel show Cruising with Jane McDonald.

It is going to be a hit, man, all over again

Agent 47 is put to the test in HITMAN: Definitive Edition (18), as Danish studio IO Interative celebrates its 20th anniversary by bringing together the original award-winning video game with all of its previously released content and updates. It also includes new disguises for the stealthy assassin anti-hero which pay tribute to some of their other popular titles .

The ICA agent, a Mark Strong look-alike, has exotic locations to choose from in Europe, Africa, America and the Far East as he hones his skills on missions to find and eliminate various targets.

Warner Bros have taken on the title, which has a similar feel to their Batman franchise with emphasis on sneaking and surprise. An internet connection is needed as not all the add-ons are pre-loaded on the disc. It is available for Xbox One and PlayStation 4.

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SATURDAY'S TV JUNE 2

CHOICE

Gareth Southgate

Live International Football (ITV, 5pm)
England v Nigeria (Kick-off 5.15pm). Coverage of the friendly encounter at Wembley Stadium, where both sides continue their preparations for this month's World Cup. England have just this match and one against Costa Rica to play before they fly out to Russia, where they will begin their campaign against Tunisia on June 18th. Gareth Southgate has named a relatively inexperienced squad for the finals, but will be using this fixture to assess his options, while Nigeria also have the World Cup to look forward to, and group fixtures against Argentina, Croatia and Iceland. Mark Pougatch presents, with commentary by Clive Tyldesley and Glenn Hoddle.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** The Hairy Bikers' Asian Adventure. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Athletics: Diamond League Rome Highlights. **2.00** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. Warrington Wolves v Wigan Warriors (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.35** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.20** Celebrity Mastermind. (R) **5.50** BBC News.

6.00 Regional Programme.

6.05 Film: Shrek 2. (2004) The grouchy ogre and his new wife Princess Fiona set out on a journey to meet her parents. However, the king and queen are less than impressed with their daughter's choice of husband, while a conniving fairy godmother is determined to make sure her own son gets to marry the princess. Animated adventure sequel, with the voices of Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz, Eddie Murphy, Antonio Banderas, John Cleese, Julie Andrews, Jennifer Saunders and Rupert Everett.

7.30 Pointless Celebrities. Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman present a Radio 2-themed edition, with contestants including Jo Whiley, Jeremy Vine, Zoe Ball, Michael Ball and Ken Bruce. (R)

8.20 Casualty. Alicia struggles to process the events of her night with Eddie, and collapses after refusing to take a break. Just as she starts to tell Ethan about her problems, Elle interrupts.

9.10 All Round to Mrs Brown's. Mrs Brown's Boys creator, writer and star Brendan O'Carroll dons Agnes's famous cardigan and curlers once again, throwing open the doors of the larger-than-life Irish matriarch's home to host the Saturday night chat show, filmed in front of a live studio audience. Joining in the fun this time around are musical duo Sting & Shaggy, This Morning's resident chef and star of Celebrity Juice Gino D'Acampo, Loose Women presenter Christine Lampard, and Dragons' Den stalwarts Peter Jones and Deborah Meaden.

10.10 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.30 Film: Meet the Fockers. (2004) Comedy sequel, with Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro.

12.20 The Button. (R) **12.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. (R) **6.40** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **7.05** The Pets Factor. **7.30** The Dengineers. **8.00** Absolute Genius Super Tech with Dick & Dom. **8.30** Beyond Bionic. **9.00** Steve Backshall v the Monster Mountain. (R) **10.00** Astronauts: Do You Have What It Takes? (R) **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** SAS: Rogue Warriors. (R) **1.00** The World According to Kids. (R) **2.00** Money for Nothing. (R) **2.30** Second Chance Summer: Tuscany. (R) **3.30** Love in the Countryside. (R) **4.30** Flog It! (R) **5.20** Grammar Schools: Who Will Get In? (R)

6.20 The Forest. The Galloway Hills Rally draws crowds of visitors to the park, while tree planter Alastair Livingstone restocks a recently felled site with sycamore and oak. (R)

6.50 Dad's Army. Walmington-on-Sea leaves its mark on a visiting French general when the platoon repaints Lady Maltby's Rolls-Royce just in time for an official engagement. (R)

7.20 Film: Ladies in Lavender. (2004) The lives of two elderly spinster sisters are thrown into turmoil when a handsome Polish castaway washes up on the shore by their Cornish home and reawakens long-dormant yearnings and memories. Period drama directed by Charles Dance, starring Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Daniel Bruhl, Miriam Margolyes, Natascha McElhone and Freddie Jones.

9.00 Nothing Like a Dame. Eileen Atkins, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright and Maggie Smith let the cameras in on a friendship that goes back more than half a century. Coming together for a weekend at the country retreat Dame Joan once shared with her husband Laurence Olivier, the acting greats discuss their lives and careers, reminisce about their humble beginnings in the theatre, and reflect on love and loss.

10.30 All Girls Live at the Apollo. A female-only special of the comedy show in which leading performers from the stand-up circuit entertain a packed house at London's Hammersmith Apollo.

11.15 Later Weekend with Jools Holland.

12.15 Film: Quartet. (2012) **1.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **6.55** The Oddbods Show. (R) **7.05** Star Wars Freemaker Adventures. (R) **7.30** Teen Titans Go! (R) **7.45** Adventure Time. (R) **7.55** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball On Saturday. **9.25** James Martin's Saturday Morning. **11.20** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **12.15** ITV News; Weather. **12.30** Little Big Shots. (R) **1.30** ITV Racing Live: The Derby. Including coverage of the 4.30 Investec Derby. **5.00** Live International Football. England v Nigeria (Kick-off 5.15pm).

7.30 ITV News; Weather.

7.45 Regional Programme; Weather.

8.00 The British Soap Awards 2018. Phillip Schofield presents coverage of the event from London's Hackney Empire, featuring awards including Best Actor, Best Actress, Villain of the Year, Best Comedy Performance, Best Newcomer, Best Single Episode and Best Storyline. The Outstanding Achievement award will be presented to a long-standing member of the soap community, while one of Coronation Street, Doctors, EastEnders, Emmerdale and Hollyoaks will take home the coveted Best British Soap gong.

10.05 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 International Football Highlights. England v Nigeria. The key moments from the friendly international at Wembley Stadium, which was a vital one for Gareth Southgate's men in preparation for the World Cup.

11.15 Film: Rocky. (1976) A struggling boxer gets an unexpected shot at taking on the heavyweight champion of the world. Oscar-winning drama, starring Sylvester Stallone, Burgess Meredith and Carl Weathers.

1.30 Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.00** Mr Selfridge. Harry pushes ahead with plans for the Selfridge Estate, aiming to buy a field at auction, but an unexpected rival bidder poses a threat. Miss Mardle makes her mark in fashion. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Mobil 1: The Grid. **6.30** Motor Sport: British GT. **7.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.50** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.20** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.50** Frasier. (R) **9.20** Frasier. (R) **9.50** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.20** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.50** The Simpsons. (R) **11.20** The Simpsons. (R) **11.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.50** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.20** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.55** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.25** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.55** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.25** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.30** Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. (R) **5.30** The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Film: Iron Man 2. (2010) Tycoon-turned-superhero Tony Stark confronts a fearsome new foe in a Russian scientist using his own deadly hi-tech weapons to seek revenge. He also faces a struggle to keep his secrets out of the hands of both the government and an amoral rival, and discovers the armour he developed to fight evil is slowly killing him. Action adventure sequel, with Robert Downey Jr and Don Cheadle.

9.20 Live International Rugby Union. South Africa v Wales (Kick-off 10.00pm). Lee McKenzie presents coverage of the international fixture, staged at the RFK Stadium in Washington, DC. Wales move on to South America following this match for a two-Test tour of Argentina, and will be looking to improve on their recent record against the Springboks. With analysis from Ryan Jones, Ugo Monye and Thinus Delport, and reports from Sam Warburton, Alun Wyn Jones, Ken Owens and Jonathan Davies.

12.15 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Part two of two. Gordon Ramsay gives the owners of La Galleria 33 an ultimatum. (R) **1.05** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Ste is furious to learn that Leah has sold a story to a gossip magazine, while an old face turns up in the village making financial demands. (R) **3.20** Building the Dream. Charlie Luxton heads to Cornwall to help serial renovators Neil and Suzie with a contemporary build that is not just set to be very grand, but Suzie wants it finished by Christmas. (R) **4.15** My Kitchen Rules. Harrogate best friends Anna and Faye open a health-conscious restaurant. (R) **5.10** Jamie's Comfort Food. Gennaro Contaldo helps Jamie Oliver make bolognese ravioli. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.15** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.50** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **11.15** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.05** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **3.05** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **4.05** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **5.05** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! (R)

6.05 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! Sheriff Paul Bohill tackles the case of a small debt owed by ex-footballer Neil Ruddock, before being forced to evict a school dinner lady in south London. (R)

6.55 5 News Weekend.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v Pakistan. Action from the second day of the Second Test in the two-match series, which took place at Emerald Headingley Stadium. Commentary and analysis is provided by Michael Vaughan, Mark Nicholas, Geoff Boycott, Alison Mitchell, Sourav Ganguly and Charles Dagnall.

8.00 Queen Victoria and Her Tragic Family. The series concludes with a look at the queen's efforts to control her children's personal lives, arranging a marriage for Princess Louise to a gay Scottish lord and refusing to let Prince Leopold to pursue an education at Oxford owing to his ill health – which he had already passed on to his children. The programme also examines how Princess Beatrice got married against her mother's will and the arrival of Indian servant Abdul Karim in the royal household. Last in the series.

9.00 Elizabeth I: Death of a Dynasty. The drama-documentary examines the Tudor queen's rousing speech at Tilbury, her decline into old age, and the Earl of Essex's betrayal. Last in the series. (R)

10.00 Agatha Christie's Crooked House. Adaptation of the mystery novel, starring Max Irons and Terence Stamp. A man returning to London from Cairo investigates the poisoning of his fiancee's grandfather. (R)

11.05 5 News Update.

11.10 Agatha Christie's Crooked House. Adaptation of the mystery novel, starring Max Irons. (R)

12.15 SuperCasino. **3.10 Film:** The Cabin in the Woods. (2012)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 The Burrowers: Animals Underground **8.00** Patagonia: Earth's Secret Paradise **9.00** Inspector Montalbano **10.50** Sicily: Wonder of the Mediterranean **11.50** Top of the Pops: 1985 **12.50** Kate Bush at the BBC **1.50** Hot Chocolate at the BBC **2.50** How to Get Ahead: At Renaissance Court **3.50** Close

ITV2
11.05 Britain's Got Talent **12.40** Britain's Got Talent Results **1.05** Ninja Warrior UK **2.10** You've Been Framed! Gold **3.10 Film:** Red Riding Hood (2011) **4.10** FYI Daily **4.15 Film:** Red Riding Hood (2011) **5.20 Film:** The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (2014) **6.25** FYI Daily **6.30 Film:** The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (2014) **8.00 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **9.05** FYI Daily **9.10 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **10.40** Family Guy **12.35** American Dad! **1.40** CelebAbility **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
2.45 Film: Columbo: By Dawn's Early Light (1974) **4.50** Lewis **7.00** Endeavour **11.00** A Touch of Frost **1.15** On the Buses **2.10** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4
9.00 Isle of Man TT **10.00 Film:** Platoon (1986) **11.10** FYI Daily **11.15 Film:** Platoon (1986) **12.25 Film:** This Is the End (2013) **1.30** FYI Daily **1.35 Film:** This Is the End (2013) **2.35** Football Rivalries **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
11.00 The Goldbergs **1.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.30** Young Sheldon **1.55 Film:** The Core (2003) **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Speed (1994) **11.20** Gogglebox **1.25** Tattoo Fixers on Holiday **2.30** Rude Tube **3.25** Gogglebox **4.15** Rude(ish) Tube **4.40** How I Met Your Mother

Film4
11.00 Rugrats in Paris: The Movie (2000) **1.00** Epic (2013) **3.05** Dr Seuss' The Lorax (2012) **4.45** Dr Dolittle 2 (2001) **6.35** Beautiful Creatures (2013) **9.00** The Other Woman (2014) A woman discovers her boyfriend is married, and joins forces with his wife and a third lover to get revenge. Comedy, starring Cameron Diaz, Leslie Mann and Kate Upton. **11.10** The Greasy Strangler (2016) Premiere. Comedy horror, starring Michael St Michaels. **1.00** The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2 (1986) **3.10** Close

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SUNDAY'S TV JUNE 3

CHOICE

Frankie Boyle

Frankie Goes to Russia (BBC2, 9pm)
Part one of two. Frankie Boyle explores Russia in advance of the World Cup, looking at what lies behind national stereotypes and exploring the country's football culture. In the first episode, he visits the seaside town hosting the England team and a city renowned for football-related violence. He also joins a daredevil motorbike football team, records a world cup rap, and meets the sabre-wielding Cossacks policing the World Cup stadiums.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Garden Rescue. (R) **2.00** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Points of View. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Britain's Best Home Cook. (R) **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. A special episode from the royal family's Balmoral estate. Matt Baker visits Glamis castle, ancestral seat of the Queen Mother, while Ellie Harrison explores Ballochbuie Forest and goes in search of wood grouse and a royal stag.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. The roving team values more decorative objects and rarities belonging to the public.

9.00 A Very English Scandal. Hugh Grant and Ben Whishaw star in the conclusion of Russell T Davies' drama based on the true story of the downfall of political leader Jeremy Thorpe. Norman survives a bungled attempt on his life, and publicly accuses Jeremy of having hired the would-be killer to silence him – an act which finally brings their secret relationship into the public eye for the first time. With the world watching, the ensuing court case drags years of acrimony between the two men into the light, as a man who would be prime minister stands trial for conspiracy to murder. Last in the series.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Imagine – Margaret Atwood: You Have Been Warned! Alan Yentob meets the Canadian author in Toronto to discover how a childhood spent between the wilderness and the city helped shape her vision of herself and the world. (R)

11.35 Film: Up in the Air. (2009) A corporate downsizing expert finds his emotionally detached lifestyle under threat from an executive with revolutionary ideas. Comedy drama, with George Clooney and Vera Farmiga.

1.15 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.20** BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **7.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.05** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** The Beechgrove Garden. **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Spring Kitchen with Tom Kerridge. (R) **11.45** Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) **12.45** Wanted Down Under. (R) **1.30** Live Rowing World Cup. **3.00** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. **5.30** Flog It! (R)

6.00 Dragons' Den. More entrepreneurs present their money-making ideas to the panellists, including pitches for natural raw dog food, a date-based smoothie and a free-running exercise regimen. (R)

7.00 Million Pound Menu. Fred Sirieix presents the fine dining challenge which follows people who work in the food business as they seek major investment to launch their own restaurants. (R)

8.00 Journey in the Danger Zone: Iraq. Part one of two. Former soldier Adnan Sarwar explores the country to see how it has changed since he was last there as part of the occupying force in 2003.

9.00 Frankie Goes to Russia. Part one of two. Frankie Boyle explores Russia in advance of the World Cup, beginning with a visit to the seaside town hosting the England team and a city renowned for violence.

10.00 Atlanta. A rival rapper steals the spotlight from Paper Boi at a charity basketball event, and Earn spots a chance to raise his professional profile when he is mistaken for someone else.

10.20 Atlanta. Van is irritated by her successful old friend Jayde, but the pair find a way to put aside their differences while smoking weed – until Van remembers she is due a drug test at work.

10.45 Live at the Apollo. Glaswegian comedian Frankie Boyle takes to the stage at London's Hammersmith Apollo, and introduces rising stars Jack Carroll and Holly Walsh. (R)

11.15 Film: The Spectacular Now. (2013) A teenage loner bonds with a drunken classmate who helps her create a new persona for herself to boost her confidence. Drama, starring Miles Teller.

12.45 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **1.45** Holby City. (R) **2.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **6.55** The Oddbods Show. (R) **7.05** Star Wars Freemaker Adventures. (R) **7.30** Teen Titans Go! (R) **7.45** Adventure Time. (R) **7.55** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball On Sunday. **9.25** Countrywise: Secret Wild Places. (R) **10.25 Film:** Casino Royale. (1967) **1.00** ITV News; Weather. **1.10 Film:** St Trinian's. (2007) Comedy, starring Rupert Everett. **3.00** Tenable. (R) **4.00** Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. (R) **5.00** Celebrity Catchphrase. (R)

6.00 ITV News; Weather.

6.15 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.30 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Bradley Walsh presents as Westlife's Nicky Byrne, Olympian Amy Williams, Natalie Cassidy (EastEnders' Sonia Jackson) and Dave Myers of The Hairy Bikers pit their wits against ruthless quiz genius the Chaser in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds. They must work as a team and play strategically to answer general knowledge questions against the clock and race down the game board to the exit without being caught. (R)

7.30 Britain's Got Talent Final. Declan Donnelly hosts the live final of the nationwide talent search as the 12th series draws to a climax. A wide variety of acts have stepped in front of judges Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, Alesha Dixon and David Walliams eager to impress, and tonight the last remaining contestants will be putting in one last performance to earn the votes of the viewing public and get the chance to be crowned champion, win £250,000 and take to the stage in a coveted slot at this year's Royal Variety Performance. Last in the series.

10.05 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 Les Dawson Forever. A tribute to the life and career of the TV comedy star, with contributions by Barry Cryer, Rick Wakeman, Johnny Vegas, Lorraine Chase, Les's widow Tracy, and his daughter Charlotte. (R)

12.10 Great Art. (R) **1.05** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The King of Queens. (R) **6.35** Motor Sport: FIA World Rallycross Championship. **7.30** Eat the Week. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Bake Off: The Professionals. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.55** The Simpsons. (R) **2.25** The Simpsons. (R) **2.55 Film:** Eragon. (2006) Fantasy adventure, starring Ed Speleers. **5.00 Film:** Johnny English. (2003) Spy comedy, starring Rowan Atkinson.

6.35 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Escape to the Chateau. Dick gets to work on the walled garden in the spring and buys a mini tractor for the job – but it may not fit through the gate. Angel designs another suite, with black walls and mosaic mirrors, and decorates the entire dining room with blossoms so a guest can make a special wedding proposal. The couple also consider the possibility of truffle farming. (R)

8.00 Bake Off: The Professionals. Liam Charles and Tom Allen present the halfway point of the patisserie contest, with the five remaining teams being challenged to prepare 24 opera slices and 24 exotic fruit roulades, before putting a modern spin on classic French pastry the religieuse. Judges Cherish Finden and Benoit Blin will then decide which duo is not going through to the next round.

9.00 The Handmaid's Tale. Offred reflects on her relationship with her mother as she navigates her way through Gilead. In Little America, Moira tries to cope with the trauma she endured.

10.15 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jimmy Carr hosts the words-and-numbers panel game, with Sean Lock joined by Johnny Vegas, and special guest captain Sarah Millican joining forces with Rob Beckett. (R)

11.15 Naked Attraction. Dating show hosted by Anna Richardson in which two singletons choose a date from a selection of six naked people, who will be revealed to them one body part at a time. (R)

12.15 Film: The Other Boleyn Girl. (2008) Historical drama, starring Natalie Portman and Scarlett Johansson. **2.10** Building the Dream. (R) **3.05** My Kitchen Rules. (R) **4.00** Gillette World Sport. **4.25** Mobil 1: The Grid. (R) **4.50** Food Unwrapped. (R) **5.10** Fifteen to One. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wissper. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.30** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.35** The Secret Life of Puppies. (R) **6.40** Mofy. (R) **6.45** Simon. (R) **6.50** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.00** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Thomas & Friends. (R) **7.30** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.45** Rusty Rivets. **8.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.30** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Floogals. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. **10.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.20** Naughty Toddlers Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **2.20** Naughty Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **3.20** Disobedient Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **4.20** Most Shocking Talent Show Moments. (R)

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v Pakistan. Action from the third day of the Second Test in the two-match series.

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 The Unstoppable Flying Scotsman. During its lifetime, the Flying Scotsman has broken records, travelled the world, starred in a movie and even bankrupted its owners. Engineer Rob Bell presents the first of a two-part documentary charting the history of the world's most famous steam locomotive, looking at why has it inspired such affection among steam fans and still attracts huge crowds wherever it goes. (R)

9.00 The Flying Scotsman: A Legend Reborn. Part two of two. Rob Bell reveals how enthusiast Alan Pegler saved the locomotive when British Railways announced plans to scrap it in 1962. (R)

10.00 Top of the Box 95: TV's Most Controversial Year. The 20 highest rated TV shows of 1995, including One Foot in the Grave, Father Ted, Shooting Stars, Peak Practice, Brookside, and Martin Bashir's interview with Princess Diana.

11.55 Best of Bad TV: The 00s. TV gaffes of the 2000s, a decade that saw Gary Barlow trying to act, Edwina Currie performing a Wife Swap with John McCririck and someone taking a right pop at Danny Dyer. (R)

1.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Traffic Cops. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Locomotion: Dan Snow's History of Railways **8.00** How to Build Britain's Secret Engineers **9.00** Normandy '44: The Battle Beyond D-Day **10.00** The Jeremy Thorpe Scandal **11.00** Amazon Abyss **12.00** Civilisations Stories: The Empire **12.30** Locomotion: Dan Snow's History of Railways **1.30** How to Build Britain's Secret Engineers **2.30** Return to Larkinland **3.30** Close

ITV2
11.45 Film: The Flintstones (1994) **12.50** FYI Daily **12.55 Film:** The Flintstones (1994) **1.30 Film:** Planet 51 (2009) **2.35** FYI Daily **2.40 Film:** Planet 51 (2009) **3.25 Film:** Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams (2002) **4.25** FYI Daily **4.30 Film:** Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams (2002) **5.30 Film:** Despicable Me 2 (2013) **6.30** FYI Daily **6.35 Film:** Despicable Me 2 (2013) **7.30 Film:** Battleship (2012) **8.30** FYI Daily **8.35 Film:** Battleship (2012) **10.05** Britain's Got More Talent Live **11.05** Family Guy **1.00** American Dad! **1.55** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
11.05 Film: The Likely Lads (1976) **12.50 Film:** Rising Damp (1980) **2.50** A Touch of Frost **4.50** Endeavour **7.00** Vera **9.00** Unforgotten **11.00** Wire in the Blood **1.00** Blue Murder **2.20** Liverpool 1 **3.20** Road to Avonlea **5.05** George and Mildred **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
9.00 Isle of Man TT **10.00** Cycling: Criterium du Dauphine Highlights **11.00** World Rugby U20 Championship Highlights **12.00** BRDC Formula 3 Highlights **1.00** Fifth Gear **2.00** Ax Men **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
12.25 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.55** Young Sheldon **1.25** The Big Bang Theory **6.15 Film:** The Hunger Games (2012) **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Gogglebox **11.00** Gogglebox Australia **12.05** The Big Bang Theory **1.00** Tattoo Fixers on Holiday **2.10** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.00** Gogglebox Australia **3.50** Hollyoaks

Film4
11.00 Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days (2012) **1.00** Ponyo (2008) **3.05** Tooth Fairy (2010) **5.10** Carry On Nurse (1959) **6.50** The Secret Life of Walter Mitty (2013) **9.00** Last Vegas (2013) Comedy, starring Michael Douglas. **11.05** Prometheus (2012) Sci-fi thriller, starring Noomi Rapace. **1.30** The Paperboy (2012) **3.45** Close

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PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Killer in Paradise, Channel 5, 3.20pm
While on a dream vacation with her husband, a woman becomes a target after she starts to suspect one of the island's locals may have committed multiple murders. Thriller, starring Jackie Moore, Barbie Castro, Brian Gross, Jordi Vilasuso, Brian Patrick Clarke and Jacy King. (2018)

TUESDAY
Escaping Evil: Saving My Children, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Erin believes that she has left her Mob ties behind after being placed in a witness protection programme. However, the man she thought she had killed turns up under an assumed identity and bent on revenge, meaning she must protect her new life and her family. Thriller, starring Mia Kirshner and Paul McGillion. (2014)

WEDNESDAY
Seduced by a Stranger, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A single mother's life is turned upside down when an international conman Martin to her neighbourhood. Thriller, starring Chandra West, Steve Bacic and Cate Sproule. (2017)

Bend It Like Beckham, Friday, ITV, 10.45pm

THURSDAY
Girlfriend Killer, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A businesswoman who creates the perfect marriage proposals for wealthy men, becomes the target of a crazy client's obsession when she shows him compassion after his girlfriend publicly rejects him. Thriller, starring Dina Meyer, Corin Nemec and Barbie Castro. (2017)

FRIDAY
Bend It Like Beckham, ITV, 10.45pm
An English schoolgirl tries to hide her passion for football from her strict Indian parents, knowing they disapprove of her tomboyish love of the game. However, when a semi-professional player sees her in action, she is offered a place on a team, forcing her to come up with a complex plan to keep her sporting career under wraps. Comedy, with Parminder Nagra, Keira Knightley, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Juliet Stevenson and Shaznay Lewis. (2002)

Acclaimed drama makes a welcome return to the screen

Following a successful six-part first series, the acclaimed school drama, returns.

Set in a fictional Yorkshire mill town, Ackley Bridge follows the trials and tribulations at a new academy made up from two formerly isolated comprehensives – one predominantly white and the other Asian.

Predictably, the educational experiment in multiculturalism hasn't always gone to plan, and neighbours and best friends soon found themselves on different sides of a racial divide.

"Do they think they can keep us quiet with a lick of paint and some cr*p about learning to live together?" the show's most entertaining if not likeable character Jordan memorably asked, after breaking into the school office.

As well as the whole education integration topic, there were plenty of other weighty topics covered in Ackley Bridge's first season.

Dubbed the new Waterloo Road and also drawing comparisons to Shameless when it first aired, it got off to a bang with a girl posting a nude selfie of her mother online, while other subjects tackles included religious prejudice, bullying and a major death.

The second series gets under way tonight as, in a bid to disguise her sexuality, Nas (Amy-Leigh Hickman) agrees to a sham engagement with Naveed (Gurjeet Singh) – who is also in the closet.

However, as she reels from the discovery of a family secret, Nas struggles to continue the lie and emotions run high at the family engagement dinner.

Headmistress Mandy (Jo Joyner) is still under pressure from wealthy school sponsor and Head of Academy Trust, Sadiq (Adil Ray).

Both the Year 7 intake and exam results have plummeted, forcing her to instigate a strict academic regime that causes uproar among staff and students alike.

English teacher Emma (Liz White) and Mandy's friendship is tested when they clash over the decision and Emma allows the students to protest.

Emma also has affairs of the heart to deal with, and on the day of Sami's (Arsher Ali) wedding, she struggles to hide her feelings for him.

Finally, Missy (Poppy Lee Friar) and Nas cause trouble for Jordan when they steal his drugs money. Will the cocky lad finally get his comeuppance?

Joining the cast for this new series is Kimberly Walsh.

The Girls Aloud singer, who has had small roles in Disney series The Lodge and Horrid Henry: The Movie, plays home-wrecking netball teacher Claire, who is also the ex-wife of Paul Nicholls' character Steve.

Walsh said: "It was so much fun appearing as Claire. It's a fantastic show with a brilliant cast. It was an honour to be part of it.

"Claire is quite different to other characters I've played in the past. She is sassy and strong and comes to blows a few times with Mandy, which was really fun to play."

Ackley Bridge, Wednesday, Channel 4, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Versailles
BBC2, 9pm
New series. Louis celebrates France's victory over the Protestant Dutch and their allies by welcoming Leopold of Hungary and his niece Eleanor to Versailles, but the defeated emperor's own ambitions could have personal consequences for the French king. Madame de Montespan finds a way to hurt a former friend in the king's prim companion Francois de Maintenon, while Philippe returns a war hero, accompanied by his brother-in-arms Guillaume, who is rewarded by the King for his bravery in battle.

TUESDAY
Our Girl
BBC1, 9pm
It's a busy week for Michelle Keegan – on Wednesday she kicks off a new run of Who Do You Think You Are?, but first she's back as Lance Corporal Georgie Lane in the latest run of the military drama. As the series begins, Georgie is still heartbroken over the death of Elvis Harte. She copes by throwing herself into her job – which in this series involves 2 Section heading to Nigeria as part of the British Army's efforts to help train local forces in the fight against terror. However, both the Brits and the Nigerian Army are put on edge when they encounter a local crime boss and a band of mercenaries in a village near the site where a group of school girls were abducted. 2 Section step in to help the local authorities track down the girls, but Georgie unwittingly places herself and her comrades in danger.

WEDNESDAY
Great Rail Restorations with Peter Snow
Channel 4, 8pm
New series. Peter Snow and Henry Cole visit projects across the country where teams of restoration experts are attempting to restore historic railway carriages to their former glory. The first stop is the stunning Vale of Llangollen in North Wales, to visit a 1912 carriage designed by Sir Nigel Gresley, the creator of the Flying Scotsman, where Henry explores how the emergency cord was invented and learns how rail travellers coped before toilets were introduced on trains.

Grenfell: The First 24 Hours
ITV, 9pm
In the early hours of June 14, 2017, a blaze broke out at Grenfell Tower in west London, claiming 72 lives and injuring many others. ITV is marking the approach of the appalling tragedy's first anniversary with this moving documentary in which survivors recall the events of that terrible night, one that rocked not only the local community, but the entire country. The programme charts exactly what happened, from the first report of the fire to the London Fire Brigade getting it under control 24 hours later. Among those featured are residents Clarita Ghavini, who was found by a neighbour, and Sammy Wordy, who remains haunted by the screams of a woman trapped inside. There's also testimony from a firefighter who rescued nine people that night.

Our Girl, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

THURSDAY
Supershoppers
Channel 4, 8pm
New series. The consumer advice show returns with Anna Richardson and Sabrina Grant providing the lowdown on favourite brands and retailers, as well as tips on how to get the best deals. They begin with a look at retail giant John Lewis, investigating whether its famous price promise can always be trusted. There is also an undercover report from a major UK high-street chain catching sales staff giving shoppers suspect advice. Plus, reports on what goes into dairy-free milk drinks, supermarket value brands and which batteries last the longest.

FRIDAY
Cruising with Jane McDonald
Channel 5, 9pm
For some people, this entertaining travelogue used to be something of a guilty pleasure, but now it's won a Bafta (the first in Channel 5's history), there's no need to hide your love of Jane McDonald any longer. And for newcomers who are wondering what all the fuss is about, this two-part special is the perfect place to start. It finds Jane exploring Australia and New Zealand, beginning with an open-top bus tour of Sydney and a trip to the Opera House, where she finds herself centre stage. Then it's on to Tasmania, where the presenter meets the staff and furry inhabitants of a wildlife sanctuary, before she heads to New Zealand and Milford Sound, which lives up to its billing as the wettest place on Earth.

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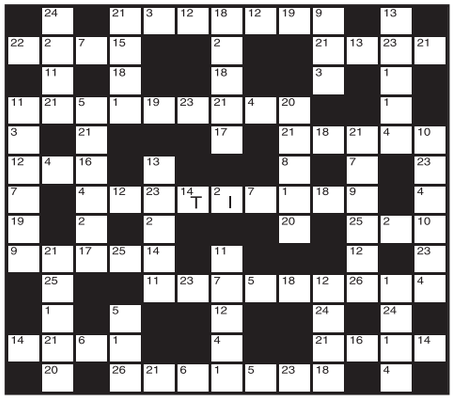
BRAIN GYM

No.482

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



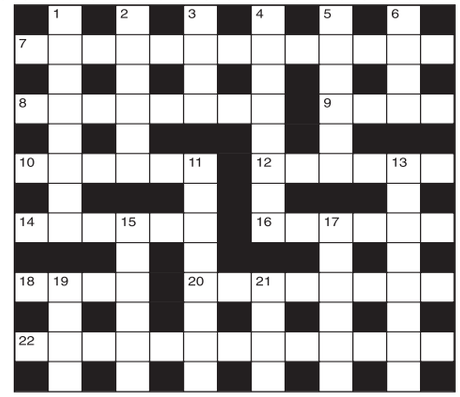
1	14 T
2 I	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
D	E	M	O	A	X	F	H	R	J	T	P	V
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
I	L	Q	Z	W	S	C	B	G	U	N	K	Y

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Marksmen who have meteoric careers? (8,5)
8. Insect with a lot to learn (8)
9. Where to put money to work (4)
10. Stays to give personal support (6)
12. Do real results come from such a testing experience? (6)
14. A wild horse on land (6)
16. Eagerly Len rummaged about in the locker (6)
18. Yet she may be a hit with the boys (4)
20. It's rash returning yet has some worth inside (8)
22. It offers protection to buyer and seller alike (7,6)

Down

1. Find her with nothing on in beds, smoking them? (8)
2. They don't like gooseberries (6)
3. It's not evident the plaintiff has a quarrel (4)
4. Not a pretty sight on the face of things (4,4)
5. Tasted differently, it's said (6)
6. A test for which there is something to be said (4)
11. What scores of young people are in? (8)
13. Hub-hub (4-4)
15. Love duets freshly turned out (6)
17. Slips in proofs of humanity? (6)
19. A club with lofty aims (4)
21. This reminds me to go to the doctor (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

7. Scrupulous (13)
8. Valuer (8)
9. Portent (4)
10. Acrid (6)
12. Character (6)
14. Fault (6)
16. Mystery (6)
18. Close (4)
20. Amicable (8)
22. Dull (13)

Down

1. Plot (8)
2. Aver (6)
3. Mental powers (4)
4. Gate (8)
5. Equip (3,3)
6. Entice (4)
11. Confirmed (8)
13. Disconnected (8)
15. Scope (6)
17. Catch fire (6)
19. Suspend (4)
21. Notion (4)

Sudoku

	7			4			1	
			7		2	9	5	
9	5	4			8			3
2			6	5				
	6					3	2	
		8		9	3			1
8			3			4	9	5
		7	9					
	9			1			8	

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

9	2	1	7	5	8	4	3	6
6	8	3	4	9	2	5	7	1
5	7	4	6	1	3	9	8	2
7	5	8	3	2	9	1	6	4
3	6	2	1	4	7	8	5	9
4	1	9	8	6	5	7	2	3
2	3	5	9	7	1	6	4	8
1	4	7	2	8	6	3	9	5
8	9	6	5	3	4	2	1	7

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Ebbs; 8 The marines; 9 Playmate; 10 Sofa; 12 Moment; 14 Tremor; 15 Stream; 17 Castle; 18 Eric; 19 Tent-pegs; 21 Elasticity; 22 Sash. Down: 2 Bill-poster; 3 Stay; 4 Repast; 5 Talent; 6 Minsters; 7 Asia; 11 Footlights; 13 Exercise; 16 Metric; 17 Candid; 18 Ewer; 20 Pays.
QUICK - Across: 1 Feel; 8 Answer back; 9 Ladybird; 10 East; 12 Marine; 14 Devise; 15 Middle; 17 Sudden; 18 Snag; 19 Browbeat; 21 Mountebank; 22 Ekes. Down: 2 Excavation; 3 Lady; 4 Aspire; 5 Headed; 6 Observed; 7 Skit; 11 Sustenance; 13 Indigent; 16 Emblem; 17 Slogan; 18 Same; 20 Bake.

Quiz

1. Who became South Africa's first executive state president in 1984?
2. Which increasingly-common medical condition is treated with a bronchodilator?
3. From which flower is orrisroot obtained?
4. Of which bird is the ptarmigan a variety?
5. Who is the Greek counterpart of the Roman goddess Pax?
6. Which school featured in a series of films by Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat?
7. Who founded the Society of Friends?
8. When was the Domesday Book completed?
9. To which church do the Moonies belong?
10. Which choirboy had a hit with Walking In The Air?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Santiago; 2 Greenpeace; 3 L Ron Hubbard; 4 England and Scotland; 5 John Grisham; 6 Lockjaw; 7 Ottorino Respighi; 8 Cyclades; 9 Elaine Paige; 10 Graham Greene.

Niner: UNLATCHED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

4563123 gives a sorcerer,
956167 gives a second sorcerer,
274567823 gives a third sorcerer.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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41% of people decide where to shop as a result of seeing advertising in local media - ahead of supermarket promotions (25%), direct mail (21%) and TV advertising (19%)

SOURCE: The Newspaper Society - Consumer Catalyst 2014

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Star quality Ivy really grows on you

LAVISH doesn't come close. The new 155-seat, three-floor, The Ivy restaurant at Birmingham's Temple Row, which opened in April, is the acme of style.

Created by the group behind the world- famous celebrity haunt of the same name in London, it's been the most eagerly-anticipated restaurant opening in the Second City this year.

Leather banquettes in a dreamy shade of burnt orange mix with plenty of green palates and stunning Art Deco glass, lights and artwork to create a venue that's part-restaurant, part-art-installation. It is, in a word, stunning.

Oozing wow and housed in the former Louis Vuitton boutique, The Ivy has the same sort of luxury that the designer label provided, though without prohibitive prices. Sophisticated but relaxed, classy but informal, it's a real Bobby Dazzler that offers customers the sort of food that people like to eat – rather than pretentious dishes designed to impress.

COMFORT

And so, for instance, the menu features such brilliant comfort food as The Ivy shepherd's pie – it's on my list for my next visit.

Prices are reasonable. Diners expecting to shell out the price of a top-class meal in London, will be surprised to find they can fork out just £21 for a three-course set menu. Expect accessible, brasserie-style eating with great value – but with added glitz and glamour.

With such glamour on every level, it's important that the staff provide service that sizzles. And, happily, they do. The venue offers an all-encompassing menu, serving British classics from dawn until dusk, including breakfast, elevenses, weekend brunch, lunch, afternoon tea, light snacks, dinner and cocktails.

Catch it if you can – the rare sesame-coated tuna

Convivial dining – in beautiful surroundings

My partner and I ate on the second floor, taking a quiet corner seat where we had a view across part of the city and the rest of the dining area. It was stunning. As, indeed, was the food. She started with a tempura prawn number. It was delightful.

My starter was equally accomplished and offered dizzying flavour. A warm crispy duck salad.

Our mains were equally accomplished. She ate a whole grilled lobster with garlic and parsley butter, watercress and thick cut chips. My main was another classic; a seared Yellowfin tuna salad.

We skipped dessert. Though the classic selection featuring crème brûlée and apple tart fine all read well, we'd got a date with a rock star on the other side of town and didn't want to be late. The Ivy did, however, do more than enough to persuade us to return. Classic dishes, plenty of choice, good skills from the kitchen, engaging service and decent prices were duly noted – though, in truth, it's the venue itself that has star quality.

The Ivy, in London, is one of Britain's great gastronomic institutions and looking to replicate the Covent Garden joint in Birmingham was no easy task. The original has a near 100-year history and welcomed such guests as Sir Laurence Olivier and Sir John Gielgud, Benedict Cumberbatch, Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman, Madonna, David and Victoria Beckham, Angelina Jolie, Dame Judi Dench, Sir Ian McKellen and James McAvoy.

The Birmingham one might not feature a cast quite so starry. Nonetheless, those behind the impressive launch can tick the box reading: Mission Accomplished. For The Ivy Birmingham is hands down the best new launch in the city in recent years. ANDY RICHARDSON

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Motown the Musical

If ever a musical genre lent itself to theatre, it was the mass harmonics and wall-of-sound dramatics of Motown. Motown the Musical is the story of Berry Gordy, a former Detroit car-worker living in an America riven by race riots, who scraped together a shoestring budget in 1959 to found a record label which became its own assembly-line of sensational hits.

Featuring 40 classic songs including My Girl, Stop! In The Name of Love, Dancing in the Street, I Heard It Through The Grapevine and Ain't No Mountain High Enough, this production won't disappoint.

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Dominic Cavendish, The Telegraph

The Tina Turner Musical

Nobody ever did storming, gyrating rock goddess like Tina Turner, one of the best-selling artists in history, whose rasping power vocal, tempestuous personal life and sheer survival instinct were just begging to be turned into a rock opera.

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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Three bed home located in a peaceful area

A home that really stands out from the crowd, this three-bedroomed link-detached house in Muirfield Crescent, Oakham, Oldbury, has flexible living accommodation.

Located in a peaceful area of Oakham, and an ideal long-term family home or investment buy, it is for sale through loveyourpostcode.com at offers over £224,950.

With flexible living quarters this house is ideal for the long-term family home, or a perfect investment.

Also having commuter motorway links nearby, and direct access to the City Centre, Blackheath High St and Oldbury Town Centre, this house does have a lot to offer.

There is a front garden with a side driveway with parking for two vehicles and a laid lawn area.

In more detail the accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hallway. Off this is the first reception room which opens up to the dinning room, making a great space for entertaining and socialising.

With a fitted kitchen the property has everything you need including integrated appliances.

Throughout the ground floor of the property you have plenty of light through double glazed windows.

The dining room has door opening to the rear garden. The family bathroom is also situated to the ground floor.

To the first floor is the landing. Off this the spacious master bedroom has a window allowing for plenty of natural light. The second double bedroom is also spacious. The third and final bedroom a single bedroom, or perhaps could be used as a study?

To complete the first floor you have the second family bathroom which has over head shower and bath, a WC and a wash hand basin.

The location of this property sits within close reach of transport links to Birmingham City Centre, Dudley and Wolverhampton. Local shopping centre is within a 15 minute walk to Oldbury Green Retail Park. Local schooling nearby is Oakham Primary, Sandwell Community School and Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy.

OLDBURY **£224,950**

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PROPERTY

Smart family home is situated in a popular spot

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£154,950

with viewings being highly recommended.

A porch protects the front door which opens to the entrance hall with stairs off and under stairs storage. The front reception room is the real heart of this home, having a feature fireplace and neutral décor. It also has a bay window allowing for plenty of light to come in. There is a dining space and an open archway into the kitchen area.

To the first floor this property are two double bedrooms and a good sized single bedroom. The modern bathroom completes this floor with white suite including a shower over the bath.

Outside, there is driveway parking for two vehicles.

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All Building & Roofing Work
Driveways, Landscaping
Over 40 year exp | All work guaranteed
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01902 579 592

Building Supplies

RECLAIMED BRICKS, Tiles, Slates, Oakbeams, Flooring, York Stone. Cawarden 01889 574066. sales@cawardenreclaim.co.uk

Carpentry & Joinery

SPR CARPENTRY Six internal pre-primed doors fully fitted from £370. 0121 5322672 or 07958 552625.

Carpet Fitters

A CARPETS & VINYLS supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small, free quotes call Mark 01543 820598 / 07941 619694.

Carpets & Upholstery

SURECLEAN
Services Of Stafford
Carpets and upholstery, cleaning and treatments
Competitive rates and multi room discounts
07908 621681

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P.W DRIVEWAYS
The Block Paving Specialists.
Patios, Driveways, Pathways, Landscaping & more.
Special Offer £50 PSM
We will beat any like for like written quote
Free Quotes & Advice
01785 609076
(Based in Stafford)

TW LANDSCAPES
Driveway Restoration Specialists
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Free no obligation quotation
call: 01785 878574
or 07845 483443

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SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards **£795**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
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DELIVERY AVAILABLE
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

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Michael- Portway Fencing

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• Fires • Gas Checks
• Landlord Certificates
• Gas Leaks Traced
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Same Day Service
Free Quotes
DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs
Call: 01902 366855/ 07761 973975

READERS ARE ADVISED To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered.

It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

Garage Conversions

ALL GARAGE CONVERSIONS CATERED FOR OAP discounts, Free quotes call 07522 643706

Gardening Services

H. COOPER & SON Landscaping / garden maintenance. No job too small, Free Quotes: 07904 929632.

Landywood Tree & Landscaping Services
All garden work, tree felling/lopping, pruning, hedges trimmed, turf, patios, fencing, block-paving etc.
www.landywoodlandscaping.co.uk
01922 898 710 / 07973 177 976

Gates

ALL METAL GATES,RAILINGS, etc. Free quotes, also repairs & fitting. 07903 500642 24 hours.

DARLASTON FABS 30 years exp in supplying/ fitting gates and railings. Free quotes: 07497 667752.

Handyman Services

YOUR LOCAL HANDYMAN
FREE QUOTES
All work guaranteed, Most trades covered, References available on request. No job too big or too small!
CALL MIKE: 07947 621047
0121 6010479

LOCK & CARPENTRY plumbing, plastering, small job specialist. Call 01902 683100 or 07934 460864.

House Clearances

A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared.
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
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Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared.
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
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A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. **07852 172641 / 07710 360327 / 01902 534021**

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07794 912844

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THE KITCHEN FITTER Over 20 years experience. Call 07881 654757 or 01543 373233.

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Plans Prepared

ADAM DESIGN, Building Plans. Drawn and submitted to council. Tel: 01902 620200 / 07941 654037. Email: adamdesign@sky.com

PROFESSIONAL HAND ink detailed drawings prepared submitted 01922 684503 07730 888063.

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MINT PLASTERING
For the very best in plastering and rendering, full rooms inc materials from 110. Halls, stairs and landings from 200
30 years experience.
Free quotes. All work guaranteed
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Call Will for a free quote
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Full heating systems £2200
Boiler Changes £1100
Longer warranty available upon request, fires and surrounds also available.
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12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

KC REMOVALS We beat any quote, full or part loads, all areas. Anything considered. Call on 07867 862227.

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MG ROOFING
Flat Roofing, Tiling, Roof Repairs, Fascias and Gutters.
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www.mgroofingwestmidlands.co.uk

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LETS TALK RUBBISH No Skips Needed.Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

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A absolute affordable skip
RUSSELL SKIPS
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West Bromwich, B70 0TU

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RE- UPHOLSTERING OF SOFA'S, DINING FURNITURE, CARAVANS, CAR RETRIMS AND MORE.
www.mrbsupholstery.uk
01543 877572 07738 851601

4 Pets & Animals

Equestrian Corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information, this is a legal requirement.

Guns & Dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

Pets Corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

TWO YOUNG CATS black and white, litter trained, free to good home.
07999 853085.

WEDNESBURY SANCTUARY
Needs a home for
BILLY AND BONNIE
black and white 8 week kittens.
JACK AND JILL
abandoned on field, black, 7 months old, spayed and vaccinated.
LUCY
black and white young cat, spayed and vaccinated.
0121 502 5027.

5 Business & Farming

Commercial Premises

UNITS AND OFFICE SPACE to let in Oldbury, West Bromwich and Walsall. Easy Terms. Ashmore Properties 0121 520 5318.

6 Property

Accommodation To Let

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

J9 Accommodation
NO DEPOSIT
★MOVE IN TODAY★
Studios
from **£90pw***
Rooms
from **£65pw***
**Includes Most Bills*
CHECK WEBSITE FOR LIVE LIST
Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme
01902 213121
J9accommodation.com

Overseas Property

NOTICE TO READERS
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Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901
www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

8 Motoring

Cars Under £1500

FORD KA 1.3

Black, 06 full MoT, excellent condition inside and out.

£595.

07568 780321.

FORD MONDEO

2012, Sandust, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, alarm, long MoT, metallic paint, central locking, pas, diesel, Stereo, CD

£500

07405 426386.

VAUXHALL CORSA, 2006, 73,939 miles, black, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, MoT, £700 ono. 07912 573686.

Cars Over £1500

GOOD RUNNER

AUDI SPORT A3 T FSI PETROL AUTO

2006 reg.
1984cc, 5 door hatchback.
Grey, great condition.
51,500 miles.
Only 2 previous owners.
12 months MoT.
£3,500.
01562 777748.

Cars Over £1500

BARGAIN

MG6 TURBO

MAGNETTE

2011, gold colour, 81,000 miles, 6 months MoT, new clutch, paint adjustment needed.

Hence £1,900 ono

01922 410974.

PEUGEOT 307CC

2008, 63,450 miles, blue, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, alarm, long MoT, central locking, one owner, pas, stereo, CD.

£1,950 ono.
07876 418827.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

VOLVO S40 1.6 DRIVe

A rare opportunity, (as new condition) very low emissions, no tax needed, one owner, only 41,000 miles, full main dealer service history, alloys, leather interior, full MoT, 2012, (Private reg) TJA 97OR
£6,950. (£21,000 new)
Call now 07976 88 8820.

Cars Over £1500

VOLVO S40 1.6 DRIVe

A rare opportunity, (as new condition) very low emissions, no tax needed, one owner, only 41,000 miles, full main dealer service history, alloys, leather interior, full MoT, 2012, (Private reg) TJA 97OR
£6,950. (£21,000 new)
Call now 07976 88 8820.

Classic Cars

CLASSIC CAR

MGB GT,

1971, 71,000 miles, yellow, chrome bumpers, chrome spoked wheels. show room condition.

Reg: JUK 90K

£7,995 ono

Cannock 07590 047305

Scrap Vehicles

ABC AUTO SALVAGE WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or 0121 557 0400.
Oldbury Area.

mainline Salvage & Recovery
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- FREE COLLECTION
- TOP PRICES PAID

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No Fines • No Comebacks
1000's of vehicle parts in stock
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07895 346811
www.mainlinesalvage.co.uk

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

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buyer will call

FreeAds

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Online at
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spares & accessories

Number Plates

WOLVES NUMBER

PLATE FOR SALE

W8LFS

The only one.

For more information please contact:

07976 653388

7 Jobs

Part Time - General

P/T MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST 16 hrspw @ £7.99 phr. Thursday 0630-1230, Friday 0800-1830. Temporary Contract 1-2 years. Duties will include Administration, data entry and general reception duties.
Apply in writing enclosing CV to The Practice Manager Dr's Pal & Jemahl, 33 Newton Road, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 6AA

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We provide Training in:
• First Aid / Health & Safety • Safe Moving & Handling • Security (SIA)
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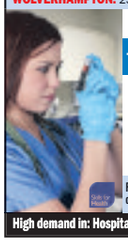
Courses

BIRMINGHAM: 5-6 September & 3-4 December
STOKE-ON-TRENT: 6-7 August **TELFORD:** 8-9 August
WOLVERHAMPTON: 25-26 July & 17-18 November

Accredited ocn



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- Accredited (advanced) qualification
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For more info. or to book online: www.geopace.com

High demand in: Hospitals - GP Surgeries - Clinics - Private Sector - MOD - Research

10 Personals

General

SEARCHING FOR MR B DICKINSON

Was a Welder at Birmingham Burner Middlemore Lane, Aldridge, Walsall.

Please get in touch with Edith from Pelsall.

Box Number P21195 ,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

Personal

AT MANYANA Gentlemans Club, 5*. 0121 472 7281. www.manyana massageparlour.co.uk

Angels
The largest adult superstore in the Midlands
• Adult Toys • Sexy Lingerie
Cinema Now Open
Unit 5 Frederick Street, Walsall WS2 9NE
01922 635544

STEVE 60

seeks female, any age, any nationality, likes days and nights out and going to church.

Cannock and Walsall areas.

Box Number P21198 ,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton,
WV1 1ES.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

Full Time General

Due to continued growth our client based in West Bromwich are looking to recruit for the following position

Accounts Clerk

(Initially to cover Maternity leave with a strong chance of a permanent position for the right candidate)

- Purchase ledger
- Sales Ledger / Credit Control
- Other Accounts Administration duties to support the overall tasks as required.
- Experience using Sage 50 system.

Flexible hours / days to suit.

For more information contact Chloe on 01902 319891 or email your CV to chloe.davies@staremploymentservices.co.uk

Warehouse Operative - Laminates Specialist: Oldbury

Arnold Laver is a successful Timber Merchant and their Depot in Oldbury requires a Warehouse Operative, to work in their dedicated laminates centre.

Responsibilities:
General operative in a busy timber merchant business, including
- Manual handling of stock and finished products - laminates
- Picking materials to a defined list
- Maintenance of stock and appropriate paperwork

Experience, knowledge and skills required:
- Minimum of two years experience working in a warehousing environment, ideally with an understanding and knowledge of laminates and decorative surfaces
- A fork lift truck licence would also be advantageous

Salary and Benefits:
Competitive | Hours of work - 40 hours per week.

Please send a CV, cover letter and details of your salary expectations to: recruitment@laver.co.uk
Closing date 06/06/18. ***No agencies - thank you.***

Arnold Laver is an equal opportunities employer.

9 Local Information

Public Notices

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES

For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to Marie Hogg on **01902 319694** or email **marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk**

(remember to include a name/ contact number for confirmation of receipt)

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regeneration and Planning
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

I hereby give notice that Sandwell Council has received the following applications under the planning acts which it is required to give public notice for the reason given at the beginning of each group of applications.

This is a major application.

DC/18/61787	Mr Mujtaba Zaka	Former Samuel Groves Building, Station Road, Oldbury B69 4LY	Proposed change of use to manual and automated paint spraying operations (Use Class B2).

Members of the public may inspect copies of these applications at Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE (between 8.45a.m. and 5.30p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Wednesday and 8.45a.m. to 5p.m. Friday) or via the Council's Public Access website (www.sandwell.gov.uk).

Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications can do so via the website, or should write to the Council at the above address within 21 days (and 21 days for Listed Building or Conservation Area consent) of the date of this advertisement quoting the application reference number.

MR JAN BRITTON, Chief Executive

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Patent Drive, Wednesbury) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2018 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding along Patent Drive, Wednesbury between Moorcroft Drive and Hallens Drive/Western Way roundabout. Traffic will be diverted via Moorcroft Drive, Hallens Drive and vice-versa. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 10/06/2018, effective from 10/06/18. Purpose – works to replace a manhole cover by Amey for Severn Trent Water.

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Unity Place, Oldbury) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2018, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicle from proceeding via Unity Place, Oldbury (Birmingham Street – the western side of Albert Street). The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 10/06/18 effective from 10/06/18. A diversion route will be signed for traffic via Birmingham Street, the eastern access of Unity Place and vice-versa. Purpose – works to lay a new duct and erect a new street cabinet by Callan Connect for BT.

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ClassifiedAds

All-new Kia Ceed made UK debut at London Motor Show

It was designed at Kia's European design centre in Frankfurt

By James Parker

The all-new Kia Ceed made its UK debut at the London Motor Show ahead of its on-sale date from August 1. The Ceed was displayed on the World Car of the Year stand at ExCel London.

Commenting on the UK debut of the Ceed, Mike Rutherford, World Car of the Year juror, director and vice-chairman said "The Kia Stinger came close to winning the World Car of the Year title in 2018. And the all-new Ceed looks like it will be a contender for the gong in 2019.

"We're delighted that the Ceed made its UK debut on the World Car Awards stand at the London Motor Show – Britain's motoring event of the year."

The five-door hatchback made its World Debut at the Geneva Motor Show in March with a new naming format – cee'd becomes Ceed – consolidates its reputation as a car for the Community of Europe, with European Design.

Designed at Kia's European Design Centre in Frankfurt by a team led by the now-legendary Peter

Relaxed and safe family motoring is promised

Schreyer, this car is the first of a whole new family of Ceed models to be launched over the next two years.

Built at Kia's modern and highly-robotised factory in Slovakia, the Ceed will initially be available with both petrol and diesel engines including smaller, turbo-charged engines to help reduce emissions and improve economy.

Both manual and dual-clutch automatic transmissions to give customers class-leading refinement control and driving pleasure whatever the road conditions.

Tested exhaustively on European roads, Kia's test tracks in Korea and at the infamous and testing Nürburgring race circuit in Germany, the all-new Kia Ceed will provide relaxed and safe family motoring and easy, economical long-distance motorway cruising for those who use their cars for business or travel.

High levels of technology in the cabin

OakGarage.co.uk

Your Local RAC Approved Dealer

Low Mileage

64 Vauxhall Meriva Estate 1.4T 16V SE Auto Silver Only 1800 Miles	£9,295
15 Citroen C4 Picasso Spec Ed 1.6 e-HDi Select Blue Only 1900 Miles	£11,995
15 Vauxhall Mokka Hatchback 1.4T SE Auto Blue Only 4000 Miles	£12,995
14 Citroen Berlingo Multispace 1.6 HDi 115 XTR Blue 7000 Miles	£10,495
15 Citroen C3 Picasso 1.6 VTi 16V VTR+ EGS6 Silver Only 8000 Miles	£8,995
14 Nissan Note 1.2 DiG-S Acenta Premium Auto Red 8000 Miles	£8,995
64 Citroen C3 Picasso 1.6 HDi 8V Exclusive Red Only 9000 Miles	£8,995
64 Citroen C3 Picasso 1.6 HDi 8V Exclusive Grey 9000 Miles	£8,495
65 Renault Clio 1.5 dCi 90 Dynamique S Nav Auto Red 9000 Miles	£10,495
66 Vauxhall Zafira Tourer 1.4T Design Silver Only 10000 Miles	£12,995
17 Nissan Note 1.2 Acenta Premium Black Only 10000 Miles	£9,995
Citroen	
64 Citroen C3 Picasso 1.6 HDi 8V Exclusive Black 14k	£7,995
64 Citroen C3 Picasso 1.6 VTi 16V Exclusive EGS6 Silver 16k	£8,995
15 Citroen C4 Picasso Diesel 1.6 e-HDi 115 Exclusive Blue 32k	£10,495
09 Citroen C5 Diesel Saloon 1.6 HDI 16V VTR+ 4dr Blue 46k	£3,695
07 Citroen C6 Diesel 2.7 HDi V6 Exclusive 4dr Auto Grey 66k	£7,995
64 Citroen Grand C4 Picasso 1.6 e-HDi 115 Exclusive Blue 26k	£11,995
15 Citroen Grand C4 Picasso 1.6 e-HDi 115 VTR+ Red 20k	£11,995
15 Citroen Grand C4 Picasso Diesel 1.6 e-HDi 115 VTR+ Black 19k	£11,995
Ford	
64 Ford C-max Diesel Estate 1.6 TDCi Zetec Black 17k	£8,995
15 Ford Fiesta Hatchback 1.0 EcoBoost Titanium Red 56k	£7,995
13 Ford Fiesta Hatchback 1.6 Titanium Powershift Red 15k	£8,995
14 Ford Focus 1.6 125 Titanium Navigator Powershift Blue 28k	£8,995
61 Ford Focus Hatchback 1.6 Zetec Grey 31k	£6,995
07 Ford Ka Hatchback 1.3i Style [70] 3dr [Climate] Blue	£895
09 Ford Kuga Diesel Estate 2.0 TDCi 4x4 Titanium White 80k	£7,995
64 Ford S-max Diesel Estate 2.0 TDCi 163 Titanium Blue 33k	£12,995
Nissan	
15 Nissan Juke Diesel 1.5 dCi Acenta White 54k	£8,995
15 Nissan Note 1.2 DiG-S Acenta Premium Auto Red 20k	£9,495
15 Nissan Note 1.2 DiG-S Tekna 5dr Auto Red 24k	£9,495
14 Nissan Qashqai 1.2 DiG-T Acenta Premium Black 25k	£12,495
13 Nissan Qashqai Special Editions 1.6 [117] 360 Black 16k	£11,495
Renault	
15 Renault Captur 1.5 dCi 90 Dynamique MediaNav Energy Blue 63k	£8,495
16 Renault Captur Sp Editions 0.9 TCE 90 Iconic Nav Cream 17k	£12,295
59 Renault Clio Hatchback 1.2 TCE Dynamique Black 89k	£2,795

Skoda

15 Skoda Fabia Diesel Hatchback 1.4 TDI SE Red 18k	£8,495
14 Skoda Octavia Diesel 1.6 TDI CR Elegance Brown 42k	£9,495
64 Skoda Roomster Estate 1.2 TSI 105 SE DSG Grey 22k	£8,995
Vauxhall	
64 Vauxhall Astra 1.6 i VVT 16v 115 Elite Red 13k	£8,795
15 Vauxhall Corsa Hatchback 1.4 SE 5dr Auto Grey 27k	£9,295
14 Vauxhall Insignia 2.0 CDTi [163] Design Auto Green 17k	£9,495
09 Vauxhall Meriva Estate 1.4i 16V Life Silver 43k	£2,795
64 Vauxhall Zafira Tourer 1.4T Exclusiv Brown 26k	£9,495
Others	
61 BMW 3 Series 320d [184] Sport Plus Edition 4dr Black 83k	£8,995
15 Hyundai IX35 Diesel 2.0 CRDi SE Nav Auto Black 44k	£12,995
15 Kia Sportage Diesel Estate 1.7 CRDi ISG 1 Silver 40k	£11,495
64 Kia Sportage Diesel Estate 1.7 CRDi ISG 1 White 17k	£12,495
62 Mercedes E Class E350 CDI BlueEFFIC [265] Sport Auto Silver 46k	£13,995
15 Peugeot 3008 Diesel Estate 1.6 HDi Active Red 17k	£10,795
09 Peugeot 308 Diesel Hatchback 1.6 HDi 90 S Silver 91k	£2,795
09 Seat Ibiza Hatchback 1.4 SE 5dr Blue	£2,995
64 Volkswagen Golf Cabriolet 1.6 TDI BlueMotion Tech SE Blue 49k	£9,495

Sales Line Open Tonight
Call Steve 07747 633329

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Come With

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- 82 Point RAC Motorscan Report
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Temperatures from -40 to +55 centigrade can be simulated

A new Ford 'weather factory' simulates any weather anytime

The air is shimmering like in the desert, while just a few metres away, it's so cold you can build a snowman. And there's a category 5 hurricane in the next room. Welcome to the "Weather Factory".

Ford's new state-of-the-art Environmental Test Centre puts all the world's weather under one roof, enabling engineers to test forthcoming vehicles – from a small Ford KA+ to a two-tonne Ford Transit in the most demanding conditions.

Altitudes higher than Mont Blanc, the tallest Alpine peak, vehicle and wind speeds of up to 250 km/h (155 mph), snow, glaring sunlight and rain are among conditions that are a push of a button away in Europe's most advanced automotive environmental test centre.

On an area the size of a football pitch, engineers can now take vehicles on demanding journeys around the world, from the desert heat of the Sahara, to the arctic cold of Siberia and the heavy humidity of Costa Rica.

"The vast range of punishing simulation tests will enable Ford drivers to be confident their vehicles can handle whatever climate zone they live in," said Joe Bakaj, vice president, product development, Ford of Europe. "Travelling to the four corners of this building is like taking a trip to the four corners of the world, and our engineers will do that around the clock, every day, to continue to develop future best-in-class vehicles."

Engineers can work on up to ten vehicles at a time

The subject of a €70 million investment, the test centre offers the first automotive wind tunnel that can simulate 5,200 metres, the same elevation as the Mount Everest North Base Camp, and the first with such a range of conditions that can be simulated under one roof. The facility can also cool two rooms to – 40 C and heat them up to 55 C, as well as generate 95 per cent humidity. The temperature extremes make the facility at the centre in Cologne, Germany, the hottest, coldest and most humid place in Europe, and home to the highest point in Western Europe.

In the UK, Ford Dunton's Environmental Test Laboratory has been capable of simulating altitudes up to 3,660m since 1999 – as well as temperatures from -40 to +55 deg Centigrade. Now fully operational, engineers can work on up to ten different vehicles simultaneously. Testing covers comfort, safety and durability, as well as electrical performance, braking, air conditioning, trailer towing, cabin heating and traffic jam situations. Engineers analyse the effects of high-speed winds on exterior parts, check the robustness against rain and snow, and see how fast a windscreen defrosts at different temperatures.

"The Environmental Test Centre represents a significant investment for Ford of Europe that will help enable the company here to develop vehicles for global markets," said Bakaj. All Ford vehicles will be tested, which features three climate wind tunnels, including a high-altitude lab, and four temperature-controlled test chambers, one of which will also facilitate humidity testing:

Wind Tunnel 1 is set up for hot and cold immersion testing. The 28 spotlights with 4,000-watt bulbs help to simulate the powerful sunbeams that enable engineers to check how fast the cabin can be cooled. This wind tunnel can also evaluate the interior noise from vehicle systems at different speeds, temperatures and humidity levels, to check the heating and air conditioning noise

Wind Tunnel 2 is also set up for hot and cold immersion testing. Engineers can use this wind tunnel to make snow and rain to check the effect on visibility, engine starts and how long it takes to heat the cabin

Wind Tunnel 3 is the altitude lab, where engineers can test vehicles at wind speeds of up to 120 km/h (75 mph) at up to 5,200 metres. The high altitude cold start and durability tests ensure the vehicle's liquids don't burst their lines when working under higher pressure.

"We can see how windshield wipers function in Arctic temperatures, how engine performance changes in extreme heat and cold, and even how much snow falls on the driver's head when they open the door. It's an engineer's dream," said Michael Steup, project manager, Environmental Test Centre, Ford of Europe.

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Annie Hicklin breaks through to fire at goal for the Cannock Olympia team

Olympia Cannock thwart a Stroud attack on their way to becoming national championships

MVP Olivia Gonsalves scores for Olympia Cannock

Athalia Imbanga bursts through for Cannock

Girl power! Team gets hands on national title

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

"It is really difficult to win the national two years ago so this really is a fantastic achievement."

A TALENTED handball team is celebrating after being crowned national champions for the second successive year.

Cannock Olympia reclaimed their under-19s national handball title after beating Stroud at the Derby Arena.

The victory is the latest in a long line of success for the team which is coached by Maria Moore.

Over the past few years, the Olympia under-19s team have reached 10 national finals, winning eight of them.

Olivia Gonsalves, Athalia Imbanga, Ellie Smith, Annie Hicklin and Mia Williams all played starring roles in their latest triumph – with Imbanga netting in the final 20 seconds to secure the 24-23 win over Stroud.

And club chairman Nenad 'Pop' Popovic believes the girls' success will never be repeated.

Special

"It is really difficult to win the national two years ago so this really is a fantastic achievement," he said. "The success of this team will never be repeated.

"It is special because all the girls attend Cardinal Griffin Catholic College except for one who is from Sutton Coldfield.

"They have now played in 10 national finals, winning eight of them and have only ever lost one game in their age category.

"The girls are a credit to Cannock and the area."

Following the performance at the Derby Arena, Gonsalves was crowned Most Value Player for the second successive year. And while she is too old to play for the team next year, Popovic isn't ruling out a hat-trick of national titles.

"All but three of the girls are eligible to play for the under-19s next year," he added.

"Some of them are going off to play in the senior for Manchester Hawks.

"It could be a hat-trick of victories but it is going to be very difficult.

"Gonsalves was crowned MVP but she can't play next year because she is too old by three days which she isn't happy about.

"But this is a fantastic team full of talented players so they will give it everything."

Meanwhile, Popovic thanked team sponsor Cameron Homes for the role they have played in the team's success.

"We have all benefited from the support of Cameron Homes who are drivers behind girls' handball in the area," he added.

"Because of all the support they have given us we have been able to grow and attract girls from further afield. We have now got a host of talented youngsters coming through the ranks and they'll ensure the club is successful for many years."

The Olympia team celebrate their success, which follows last year's win

RAF runners fly to a record relay run

RUNNERS have smashed a relay world record by more than four hours at RAF Cosford. The challenge saw 100 members of the RAF clock up consecutive 10 kilometre runs on the athletics track at the air force base in 64 hours, 36 minutes and 22 seconds.

The previous record was set in Palos Heights in Illinois, in June, 2015 at 69 hours, six minutes and 52 seconds.

Servicemen and women are now waiting with bated breath for the Guinness World Record adjudicators to verify their attempt. Runners from air force bases across the UK descended on Shropshire for the attempt.

The final 10k leg was run by senior aircraftsman Michael Kallenberg, the venture's chief organiser. He said: "It has been a long three or four days, but we're all delighted that we've broken the record. I was quite lucky doing the final leg, I got to enjoy it and lap it up as it were.

"I just thought, with it being the 100th anniversary of the RAF, it would be nice to set a new world record in celebration."

Howzat! New cricket pitches now on way

THREE all-weather cricket practice pitches and a basketball court are to be created as part of a £150,000 new sports centre.

Wolverhampton Council is working with the England and Wales Cricket Board on the scheme for Peace Green, which is off the Dunstall Road, Dunstall Hill. Work is due to start over the next few weeks. It is hoped that the facilities will be ready in September.

Health

Artificial cricket wickets are also set for East Park, Claregate Playing Fields, Fowlers Park, Newbridge Playing Fields, King George V Playing Fields in Wednesfield, Goodyear park off the Stafford Road and Ward Street in Bilston.

Councillor Hazel Malcolm, cabinet member for public health, said: "These facilities will have a major role to play in improving health and well-being."

Back in best shape for this fight – Davis

BIRMINGHAM super bantamweight, Sean 'Showtime' Davis, is looking forward to his ring return. Davis, is set to fight on BCB Promotions Emerging Stars card on Saturday, June 9.

The Brummie boxer has been in a number of high profile bouts, including fights for the WBC International Super Bantamweight Title and BBBofC British Super Bantamweight Title, and is looking forward to stepping back in the squared circle.

"I am feeling great and I am back in the best shape possible," he told www.bcb-promotions.com. "It has been a long time since my last fight and I am really happy to get back in the ring. The work rate for me has always been very high but I seemed to have found a new level of fitness."

Davis made the difficult decision to move trainers from Peter Christie to Shaun Cogan earlier this year. It was a tough call to make for the likeable 26 year-old, having been with Christie since childhood. However, he is enjoying life under his new mentor.

Girls keep their hands in to reach the very top

See page 35

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Brummies riding to top after victory

BIRMINGHAM remain the only unbeaten side in British Speedway after a crucial 48-42 National Trophy win at Coventry on Sunday.

Ahead of last night, Wednesday's return at Perry Barr it moved them to within one point of the Bees who sit on 11 points, the same total as rivals Cradley after their big win at Buxton.

The scores were tied after the opening two races following heat wins from skipper Tom Bacon and in-form reserve Leon Flint.

And there was still nothing to separate the sides after Jack Parkinson-Blackburn squeezed under Luke Ruddick on the entrance to lap three in the third.

Even though home captain Jon Armstrong got his wheels in line to pass Flint on the entrance to lap two of the fourth, the Edwards Plumbing Brummies edged in front with Danyon Hume storming to a convincing race win.

But Flint got back on track in the next as he settled in behind Bacon for a first maximum of the afternoon to move the Brummies six clear. That was still the gap going into Heat Ten but the hosts gated on a 5-1 and threatened to move back within touching distance.

But Parkinson-Blackburn had other ideas and was able to cut back under Luke Harris off bend two of the final lap.

It was Birmingham who then looked destined for a 5-1, but as Bacon took the chequered flag for his third straight win, Flint reared off the back wheel out of the final bendh. But Flint made amends in the very next race, gating from the inside to drift Ruddick wide and creating plenty of room for Parkinson-Blackburn to storm up the inside to move 40-32 in front.

Bacon led home another share of the spoils in Heat 13 with Hume coming down in the opening bends, but Flint secured victory with a second place in the penultimate race.

That left Birmingham needing an advantage in the final heat, but home No.1 Connor Mountain made the best start to take the win and also deny Bacon a maximum.

Encouraging signs for future of team

BIRMINGHAM co-promoter David Mason says he was encouraged by all aspects of last Wednesday's Travel Plus National League opener against the Isle of Wight.

Not only did the Edwards Plumbing Brummies win 53-37, but they also had their highest number of junior supporters through the turnstiles since the club entered the National League in 2015.

Said Mason: "I left Perry Barr on Wednesday feeling highly encouraged by everything to be honest.

"I think the most pleasing aspect of Wednesday though was how many people took advantage of our kids 11 and under for free offer."

Cradley boost trophy hopes with win

Cradley Heathens in action

CRADLEY revived their National Trophy hopes by securing maximum points with a 57-32 win at Buxton.

Despite only being with four of their own riders, the Heathens took advantage of an understrength Hitmen side whose problems grew as the meeting progressed with key riders pulling out through injury.

Heathens got their noses in front as early as heat two when Jason Edwards and local lad James Chattin combined for a 4-2 in the re-run after Whitmore had been disqualified for the hosts after sliding off in the initial staging. Kyle Bickley gated in the third and new signing Chris Widman got by Sam Woolley for a second successive 4-2. Alfie Bowtell and Edwards got the better of inexperienced Kieran Douglas and established an early eight-point lead.

The Derbyshire outfit hit back with a maximum in the next race as Ben Wilson made it two race wins out of two while Heathens guest Joe Lawlor couldn't find a way past skipper Tom Woolley.

Heathens stamped their authority on the fixture as Bickley and Widman bagged a 5-1 in the seventh before Bowtell and Edwards won a 5-0 after lapping Sam Woolley who had remounted after falling. That opened up a 13-point lead for the Heathens who took the next four race wins.

TIVI TAKE THEIR CASE TO THE FA

TIVIDALE are appealing to the FA after failing to gain promotion to the Midland League Premier.

The Beeches outfit finished second in the West Midlands Premier last term.

Manager Dave King

Being runners-up does not usually result in going up but with Ilkeston Town going up from the Midland League Division One – another feeder league – into the Premier as runners-up, Tivi manager Dave King is struggling to find sense in the situation.

"If Ilkeston weren't going up, we wouldn't have any grounds to complain about it," said King.

"Because Ilkeston are in there, though, going up, we have a case. Them getting promoted and not us doesn't make sense."

What particularly grates on King and his Tividale comrades is that they had a higher points-per-game ratio than Ilkeston – 2.34 to 2.26.

"There is an appeal now, that is going to happen," said King. "Hopefully we'll win the appeal and go up – and deservedly so. The lads will really be gutted if it doesn't happen now."

Wolverhampton Sporting won the West Midlands Premier in fantastic fashion and have had their spot in the Midland Premier confirmed.

Also in the Midland Premier will be Walsall Wood, bouncing back at the first attempt following a superb season under former Saddlers striker Gary Birch. Remaining in the West Midlands Premier are Bewdley Town, Bilston Town, Black Country Rangers, Cradley Town, Dudley Sports, Dudley Town, Smethwick, Wednesfield and Wolverhampton Casuals.

Coming up into the league are Shropshire side Wem Town, while Newport Town – managed by ex-Wolves striker Adam Proudlock – are appealing after being denied promotion to the division.

Referees are kitted out for clash

Organiser Jamie Lunn, centre, with Sports Shop owners Nick Jones, left, and Greg Walters

THE men in black will be swapping their traditional match-day attire on Sunday when they take to the field for charity.

Two teams of referees will be in action in a clash that has been organised by the Whistle Foundation – a group of four officials who stage games to raise funds for charity. This year's match takes place at the Birmingham FA's Ray Hall Lane base in Great Barr and will honour former referee and Albion mascot Richard Eades, who died last year, with proceeds from the day going to the Smile for Joel charity.

And the refs will certainly look the part thanks to the Sports Shop in Kingswinford after owners Greg Walters and Nick Jones agreed to supply the playing kit free of charge.

"It's great gesture from Greg and Nick," said Jamie Lunn, a founder member of the foundation. "We are really grateful for their support."

Former Premier League whistle-blower Alan Wiley has agreed to take charge of the contest with Football League refs Craig Taylor and Joe Clark running the line.

The main game kicks off at 2pm but the action starts at 10am with a series of junior games. Refreshments are available throughout the day while there are side stalls and inflatables to keep everyone entertained.

Bruce urges bruised Jack 'stay at Villa'

STEVE BRUCE has urged Jack Grealish to stay at Villa for another season following defeat in the play-off final.

Grealish was one of Villa's stand-out performers during Saturday's 1-0 defeat to Fulham and, after watching him get kicked from pillar to post on the Wembley turf, Bruce said Slavisa Jokanovic's side targeted his No.10.

Villa could be forced to sell players this summer in order to balance the books because their parachute payments from the Premier League will be reduced again, but Bruce doesn't want Grealish to be one of those leaving the club.

"Of course there's going to be speculation over Jack," said Bruce. "Me personally, I would like him to stay. I think another year with us would do him the world of good. He's playing regular football week in, week out."

Grealish was fouled in the play-off final more than any other player had been fouled in a Championship game last season. Bruce felt the 22-year-old was targeted, and he was particularly incensed by a stamp from Ryan Fredericks in the first half.

"Those big decisions went against us," said Bruce. "The boy, for me, should have had a red card very early."

Grealish's performance was a mixed bag. He nearly scored a wonder-goal in the second half after a mazy dribble, but let Tom Cairney go in the lead-up to Fulham's winner and might have seen red himself after lunging in on the Fulham captain.

Huge total helps Dartmouth on way

WEST Bromwich Dartmouth piled up 273-9 against Kenilworth Wardens in the Birmingham League Premier.

Jay Parmar top scored with 99, while Mark Pidgeon (4-51) and Prerak Mankad (3-55) were the most successful bowlers for Wardens, who slumped from 52-1 to 81-6 before an unbroken seventh wicket stand of 88 between Pidgeon (48 not out) and Max Silvester (41 not out) steered them to a losing draw.

After losing the toss at Smethwick, Dorridge were bowled out for 175 with Mo Sheikh taking 5-36e. Waqar Saleem compiled a neat innings of 80 to secure a three-wicket win for Smethwick.

★★★

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